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Report of the Commission on Human Settlements* on the work of its seventeenth session (5–14 May 1999)

* The present document is an advance version of the report of the Commission on Human Settlements on the work of its seventeenth session. The final report will be issued as *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 8* (A/54/8).

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Chapter I
Introduction

1. The Commission on Human Settlements was established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 32/162 of 19 December 1977.

2. The report of the Commission on the work of its seventeenth session is submitted to the General Assembly in accordance with section II, paragraph 6, of resolution 32/162.

3. The Commission consists of 58 members, each elected for a four-year term: 16 from African States, 13 from Asian States, 6 from Eastern European States, 10 from Latin American and Caribbean States and 13 from Western European and other States. The Commission is composed of the following members:

Algeria*
Argentina***
Bangladesh**
Barbados*
Belarus**
Belgium**
Benin*
Bolivia***
Brazil***
Bulgaria*
Cameroon***
Chile***
China**
Colombia*
Czech Republic*
Democratic Republic of the Congo***
Denmark*
Ecuador**
Ethiopia**
Finland***
France**
Gabon***
Gambia***
Germany*
India*
Indonesia**
Iran, Islamic Republic of***
Italy**
Jamaica**
Japan***
Jordan*
Kenya*
Liberia**
Lithuania***
Malawi**
Mali***
Mexico*
Namibia**
Netherlands**
Norway*
Pakistan***
Philippines*
Poland**
Republic of Korea**
Russian Federation***
Senegal***
Spain*
Sri Lanka*
Sudan*
Sweden**
Tunisia*
Turkey***
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland***
United States of America***
United Arab Emirates*
Venezuela**
Viet Nam***
Zambia**

* Term of office expires on 31 December 1999.

** Term of office expires on 31 December 2000.

*** Term of office expires on 31 December 2002.

4. The seventeenth session of the Commission on Human Settlements was held at the headquarters of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), Nairobi, from 5 to 14 May 1999.

Chapter II
Organization of the session

A. Opening of the session

5. The session was opened on Wednesday, 5 May 1999, by M. Afsarul Qader, Chair of the Commission at its sixteenth session. A summary of his statement is provided in annex IV.A.

6. Following the statement by Mr. Qader, a video-tape recording of a message from the Secretary-General was shown; the text of the Secretary-General's message is reproduced in annex V.

7. The Acting Executive Director of Habitat, Klaus Töpfer, then delivered a policy statement highlighting his vision for the future. A summary of his statement appears in annex IV.B.

8. Also at the opening meeting of the session, the Commission was addressed by 11-year-old Liz Ochola, representative of a group of Nairobi street children, who informed participants of the experiences, hopes and aspirations of street children in urban areas. Following her address, a short play was performed by a group of street children.*

9. A group of drummers from Burundi, the Tambours du Burundi, also performed at the opening meeting.

10. The President of the Republic of Kenya, Daniel Toroitich arap Moi, then addressed the Commission and inaugurated the session. A summary of his statement is provided in annex IV.C.

B. Attendance

11. The following States members of the Commission were represented:

Algeria
Argentina
Bangladesh
Barbados
Belarus
Belgium
Benin
Brazil
Bulgaria
Cameroon
Chile
China
Colombia
Czech Republic
Democratic Republic of the Congo
Denmark
Ethiopia
Finland
France
Gabon
Gambia
Germany
India
Indonesia
Iran, Islamic Republic of

* In addition to the address on behalf of street children delivered at the opening meeting, the Commission was also presented during the session with a Children's Declaration, the text of which is contained in annex VI.

Italy
Jamaica
Japan
Jordan
Kenya
Liberia
Lithuania
Malawi
Mali
Mexico
Namibia
Netherlands
Norway
Pakistan
Philippines
Poland
Republic of Korea
Russian Federation
Senegal
Spain
Sri Lanka
Sudan
Sweden
Tunisia
Turkey
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
United States of America
United Arab Emirates
Venezuela
Zambia

12. The following States not members of the Commission participated as observers:

Angola
Austria
Botswana
Burkina Faso
Burundi
Canada
Chad
Comoros
Costa Rica
Côte d'Ivoire
Cyprus
Egypt
Eritrea
Ghana
Greece
Hungary
Iraq
Israel
Kuwait
Lesotho
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya
Madagascar
Morocco
Mozambique
Nepal
Nicaragua
Nigeria
Peru
Portugal
Romania
Saudi Arabia
Seychelles
Sierra Leone
Slovakia
South Africa
Swaziland
Switzerland
Thailand
Uganda
United Republic of Tanzania
Yemen
Zimbabwe

13. The Holy See was represented by an observer.

14. The observer for Palestine to the United Nations also participated.

15. The following United Nations bodies were represented:

Economic Commission for Africa
Economic Commission for Western Asia
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
United Nations Development Programme
United Nations Environment Programme
United Nations Drug Control Programme
United Nations Volunteers Programme
World Food Programme

16. The following specialized agencies were represented:

International Labour Organization
International Monetary Fund
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
World Bank
World Health Organization (WHO)
World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

17. The following intergovernmental organizations were represented:

African Development Bank
Commonwealth Secretariat
European Community
Shelter-Afrique

18. Representatives of the following national, regional and international associations of local authorities attended the meeting: Arab Towns Organization, Asociación Municipios de Honduras, Association of Finnish Local Authorities, Association of Urban Authorities (Mauritius), Association of Local Government Authorities of Kenya, International Union of Local Authorities, Organization of Islamic Capitals and Cities, South African Local Government Association, United Towns Organization/Fédération Mondiale des Cités Unies, United Towns of Africa and World Associations of Cities and Local Authorities Coordination (WACLAC).

19. The local authorities of the following cities were also represented: Addis Ababa, Bamako, Barcelona, Blantyre, Boulsa, Bucharest, Doula, Dubai, Greater Johannesburg, Ibague, Lusaka, Nairobi, Oslo, Ouagadougou, Sung Nam and Trencin.

20. In addition, 93 non-governmental organizations were represented. A full list of the non-governmental organizations attending the session, together with the names and contacts of their representatives, may be found in the final list of participants (HS/C/17/INF/10/Rev.2).

21. Three private sector organizations were represented.

22. Global Parliamentarians on Habitat was also represented.

C. Election of officers

23. At the 1st plenary meeting, on 5 May 1999, Germán Garcia Durán (Colombia) was elected Chair of the Commission at its seventeenth session.

24. The following other officers were also elected for the session:

Vice-Chairs:

Mr. Abdourahmane Sow (Senegal)
Mr. Lars-Göran Engfeldt (Sweden)
Mr. Vasil Marinov (Bulgaria)

Rapporteur:
Mr. Hossein Fadaei (Islamic Republic of Iran)

25. Following his election, Mr. Durán made a statement, a summary of which is contained in annex IV.D.

D. Credentials

26. Pursuant to rule 11, paragraph 2, of the rules of procedure of the Commission, the Bureau reported to the Commission at its 9th plenary meeting, on 14 May 1999, that it had examined the credentials submitted by delegations attending the seventeenth session of the Commission and had found them to be in order. The Commission approved the report of the Bureau on credentials at the same meeting.

E. Adoption of the agenda

27. At its 1st plenary meeting on 5 May 1999, the Commission adopted the provisional agenda for the seventeenth session as contained in document HS/C/17/1, as follows:

1. Election of officers.
2. Credentials.
3. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.
4. Activities of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat): progress report of the Executive Director.
5. Follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II).
6. Follow-up to the special session of the General Assembly for the purpose of an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of Agenda 21.
7. Special themes:
   (a) Local implementation of the Habitat Agenda, with particular attention to local Agenda 21s;
   (b) International cooperation for the implementation of the Habitat Agenda.
8. Cooperation with partners.
9. Work programme of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) for the biennium 2000–2001.
10. Proposed budget of the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation for the biennium 2000–2001.
11. Coordination matters:
    (a) Cooperation between the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and the United Nations Environment Programme;
    (b) Cooperation with agencies and organizations within the United Nations system, intergovernmental organizations outside the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations;
    (c) Matters arising out of the resolutions of major legislative organs of the United Nations and other intergovernmental bodies which are brought to the attention of the Commission.
12. Themes for the eighteenth and future sessions of the Commission.
13. Other matters.
14. Provisional agenda and other arrangements for the eighteenth session of the Commission.
15. Adoption of the report of the session.
16. Closure of the session.

F. Organization of work

28. At its 1st plenary meeting, on 5 May 1999, the Commission established two sessional committees of the whole and allocated agenda items to them as follows: items 4, 6, 7 (a) and 7 (b) were allocated to Committee I and items 9, 10, 11 (a), 11 (c), 12 and 13 were allocated to Committee II, with the remaining items being considered in plenary meeting.

29. Following consultations with the Bureaus of the Commission on Human Settlements and the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), it was decided that the work of the plenary should be divided into two segments: first, a high-level segment, which was held from 5 to 7 May 1999 and at which the Commission considered those aspects of

agenda item 4 concerned with the revitalization of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), as well as agenda items 5, 8 and 11 (b); and, second, dialogues with local authorities and other partners, which were held on 7 and 10 May 1999.

30. Summaries by the Chair of the debate in the high-level segment and of the dialogues with local authorities and other partners appear in annex III.

31. In addition, the Commission established a Drafting Committee, chaired by Mr. Engfeldt, Vice-Chair of the Commission, to consider draft resolutions.

G. Work of Committees I and II

32. Committee I, chaired by Mr. Sow, Vice-Chair of the Commission, held four meetings from 5 to 14 May 1999, and Committee II, chaired by Mr. Marinov, Vice-Chair of the Commission, held five meetings from 7 to 14 May 1999.

H. Work of the Drafting Committee and adoption of resolutions by the Commission

33. The Drafting Committee held 10 meetings between 7 and 13 May 1999. Of the 26 draft resolutions before the Committee, it reached agreement on 22, which it forwarded for adoption in the plenary meeting. One resolution, on initiation of a housing rights programme, contained in the compilation submitted by the Committee of Permanent Representatives (HS/C/17/2/Add.3, resolution No. 14), was withdrawn. The draft resolution contained in document HS/C/17/L.6, on WACLAC, was also withdrawn by its sponsors.

34. The Drafting Committee was unable to reach consensus on two draft resolutions, on illegal Israeli human settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories (HS/C/17/L.2/Rev.1) and assistance in the Balkans in connection with the conflict in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (HS/C/17/L.4/Rev.1), which were submitted directly to the plenary for its consideration.

35. With regard to draft resolution HS/C/17/L.4/Rev.1, the Commission, at its 9th plenary meeting, on 14 May 1999, decided first, by a roll-call vote of 38 in favour, 5 against and 5 abstentions, to close the debate on the item, and then, by a vote of 36 in favour, 5 against and 4 abstentions, to approve a motion proposed by the representative of Germany, speaking on behalf of the European Union and its member and associate member States, that no action should be taken on the draft resolution. Following the approval of the motion, a number of representatives made statements in explanation of vote. In so doing, the representatives of India and the Russian Federation requested, and the Commission agreed, that their statements should be included *in extenso* in the report on the work of the session (see annex VII).

36. The resolutions, as adopted by the Commission, are contained in annex I, together with an indication of the date and meeting of their adoption. Except as otherwise indicated in annex I, all resolutions were adopted by consensus.

I. Adoption of the report of the Commission

37. The present report was adopted by the Commission at its 9th plenary meeting, on 14 May 1999.

ChapterIII
Provisional agenda and other arrangements for the eighteenth session of the Commission

38. At its 9th plenary meeting, on 14 May 1999, the Commission decided that its eighteenth session would be held from 12 to 16 February 2001 at Nairobi, immediately following the twenty-first session of the UNEP Governing Council and preceding the second substantive session of the Commission acting as the preparatory committee for the special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda. At the same meeting, the Commission decided to adopt the following provisional agenda for its eighteenth session:

1. Election of officers.
2. Credentials.
3. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.
4. Activities of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat): progress report of the Executive Director.
5. Follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II):
   (a) Local implementation of the Habitat Agenda, including the role of local authorities;

(b) International cooperation and the review of mechanisms for monitoring the implementation of the Habitat Agenda;

(c) Lessons learned from best practices and partnerships in the achievement of adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements in an urbanizing world.

6. Special themes:

(a) Security of tenure;

(b) Urban governance.

7. Work programme of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) for the biennium 2002–2003 and budget of the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation for the biennium 2002–2003.

8. Coordination matters:

(a) Cooperation between the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and the United Nations Environment Programme;

(b) Cooperation with agencies and organizations within the United Nations system, intergovernmental organizations outside the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations;

(c) Matters arising out of the resolutions of major legislative organs of the United Nations and other intergovernmental bodies which are brought to the attention of the Commission.

9. Themes for the nineteenth and future sessions of the Commission.

10. Other matters.

11. Provisional agenda and other arrangements for the nineteenth session of the Commission.

12. Adoption of the report of the session.

13. Closure of the session.

Chapter IV
Closure of the session

39. At the close of the session, a statement by the Acting Executive Director was read on his behalf by his representative, Daniel Biau. In the statement, the Acting Executive Director noted that the seventeenth session of the Commission had seen the inclusion of a number of new elements in its working style and the beginnings of a more intensive and positive dialogue with partners, especially the local authorities and women, children, youth, academia and trade unions. The Commission had committed itself to giving a revitalized Centre a new start. There was a new confidence in the transparent, reliable and lean administrative structure of the Centre, and strong backing and support for its clearly focused, campaign-oriented work programme and new vision. He was pleased that the size and structure of the proposed budget, which clearly reflected the work programme, had been endorsed and finally accepted. Thanking the host country, Kenya, for its generous hospitality, he said the Commission had been greatly honoured by the presence of the President of the Republic of Kenya, Daniel arap Moi, and the Vice-President, George Saitoti, at the opening of the session. The overall preparatory work of the meeting had been accomplished under the leadership of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), which had facilitated the work of the whole package of draft resolutions before the session. He was convinced that that cooperation had laid a solid foundation for a bright future for the Centre in Nairobi. In conclusion, he said that there now existed both the vision and the opportunity to build a new Centre for the new millennium. Each and every staff member of the Centre would be privileged to work on that historic task and ensure that the next century would begin with a solid foundation for healthy cities and enduring peace.

40. In their closing statements, the representatives of the regional groups expressed their satisfaction with the open and constructive deliberations during the session, and with its outcome. They expected that the Commission's decisions, which were strong and substantive, would be fully implemented. They also conveyed their appreciation to the people and the Government of Kenya for their hospitality and to the secretariat for the outstanding support they had received during the session.

41. Noah Katana Ngala, Minister of Public Works and Housing of Kenya, said that he believed that the resolutions adopted at the current session would go a long way to facilitating the achievement of the goals of adequate shelter for all and of sustainable human settlements.

42. The representative of the secretariat of the Youth for Habitat International Network expressed gratitude for having the opportunity to participate in the work of the session, which, he said, had proved that such participation could be successful. Drawing attention to resolution 17/19, on

partnership with youth, which had been adopted by the Commission, he said it was important for young people to be treated not only as the leaders of tomorrow, but also as the partners of today.

43. In his concluding remarks, the Chair thanked the other members of the Bureau, the chairs of the regional groups, the secretariat and all representatives to the session for assisting in the successful completion of the work of the seventeenth session. He appealed to all participants to promote the successful revitalization of the Centre and the implementation of its work programme by increasing their contributions.

44. The Chair declared the seventeenth session of the Commission on Human Settlements closed at 7 p.m. on Friday, 14 May 1999.

Annex I

Resolutions and decisions adopted by the Commission at its seventeenth session

		Date of adoption	*Page*
A.	**Resolutions**		
1.	**Resolution requiring action by the General Assembly**		
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2.	**Other resolutions**		
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17/5	Role of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)	14 May 1999	15
17/6	Views of the Commission on Human Settlements on the report of the Secretary-General on environment and human settlements	14 May 1999	16
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17/10	The rural dimension of sustainable urban development	14 May 1999	20
17/11	Women in human settlements development and in the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)	14 May 1999	20
17/12	Elimination of the use of lead in petrol	14 May 1999	21
17/13	Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000	14 May 1999	21
17/14	Resolution adopted by the Commission on Human Settlements at its seventeenth session on the preparations for the special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda	12 May 1999	22
17/15	Follow-up to the special session of the General Assembly for the purpose of an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of Agenda 21	14 May 1999	23
17/16	Local implementation of the Habitat Agenda with particular attention to local Agenda 21s	14 May 1999	25
17/17	International cooperation for the implementation of the Habitat Agenda	14 May 1999	26
17/18	Cooperation with partners: role of local authorities in the work of the Commission	14 May 1999	27
17/19	Partnership with youth	14 May 1999	28

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17/20	Work programme and budget of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) for the biennium 2000–2001	14 May 1999	29
17/21	Habitat II debt to the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation	14 May 1999	30
17/22	Cooperation between the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and the United Nations Environment Programme	14 May 1999	31
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B.	**Decision**		
17/24	Themes for the eighteenth session of the Commission on Human Settlements	14 May 1999	32

A. Resolutions

1. Resolution requiring action by the General Assembly

17/1

Follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II)

The Commission on Human Settlements,

Recalling paragraph 222(n) of the Habitat Agenda,[1] in which it is stated that the Commission on Human Settlements, under the Economic and Social Council, has the objective to monitor and evaluate progress made towards and obstacles encountered in achieving the goals of the Habitat Agenda and to recommend appropriate measures and alternative actions as deemed necessary to enhance the dynamic nature of the Habitat Agenda,

Recalling also paragraph 240 of the Habitat Agenda, in which it is stated that all partners of the Habitat Agenda, including local authorities, the private sector and communities, should regularly monitor and evaluate their own performances in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda through comparable human settlements and shelter indicators and documented best practices,

Noting with appreciation the contribution of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) in identifying and analysing best practices and lessons learned, and the role of the Dubai International Award for Best Practices in facilitating their dissemination and transfer in support of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda,

Recognizing that confusion exists as to what is exactly expected from countries by way of monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the Habitat Agenda and that clear guidelines for national Governments will contribute to the success of the special session of the General Assembly in the year 2001 for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda,

Bearing in mind the outcome of a seminar on the theme "Monitoring the implementation of the Habitat Agenda and the use of indicators", organized at the initiative of the Dutch Habitat Platform Foundation on 30 March 1999, and the important role of the Global Urban Observatory in the process of monitoring,

1. *Requests* the Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat):

(a) To select from the commitments and recommendations of the Habitat Agenda no more than twenty key items, differentiated by region, on which Governments will be asked to report;

(b) To provide a uniform set of indicators and benchmarking dates which countries will be asked to use in reporting on the key items mentioned under subparagraph (a) above;

(c) To ask countries to include in their national reports information on best practices and lessons learned, related to the key items mentioned in subparagraph (a) above;

(d) To collect and process the data under subparagraphs (b) and (c) above and to report back to national Governments;

(e) To create awareness among countries on the benefits they will obtain from a sound monitoring system and provide training programmes to assist countries in implementing a sound monitoring system;

(f) To coordinate data collection and analysis through local and national urban observatories with other United Nations agencies, as a step towards a uniform United Nations monitoring system;

2. *Recommends* to the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, the adoption of the following resolution:

"*The General Assembly*,

"*Bearing in mind* its resolutions 52/192 of 18 December 1997 on the follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and the future role of the Commission on Human Settlements and 53/180 of 15 December 1998 on the special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda,

"*Noting* that the 2000–2001 work programme adopted by the Commission on Human Settlements at its seventeenth session, in line with General Assembly resolution 52/192, is organized according to the structure of the Habitat Agenda,

"*Noting also* that the two subprogrammes of the 2000–2001 work programme correspond to the goals of the Habitat Agenda of adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlement developments in an urbanizing world,

"*Recognizing* that the overall thrust of the new strategic vision for the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and its emphasis on two

global campaigns on secure tenure and urban governance are strategic points of entry for an effective implementation of the Habitat Agenda,

"*Reaffirming* the role of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) as focal point for the implementation of the Habitat Agenda and the need for the Centre adequately to perform this role through the active mobilization and broadening of its network of United Nations, governmental and non-governmental partners,

"*Stressing* the need to provide strategic support to the efforts of local authorities and partners from civil society in the global, regional and local implementation of the Habitat Agenda,

"1. *Calls upon* all the relevant United Nations organizations and specialized agencies to take initiatives and continue with their specific actions towards the implementation of the Habitat Agenda;

"2. *Also calls upon* relevant United Nations organizations and specialized agencies that have not yet done so to identify specific initiatives and actions to be undertaken in preparation for the special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda;

"3. *Invites* the United Nations coordinator system to strengthen its support to the implementation of the Habitat Agenda through, *inter alia*, assistance to the implementation of national local plans of action based on the full involvement of local authorities and partners from civil society;

"4. *Calls upon* all Member States to initiate preparations for reporting on in-country implementation of the Habitat Agenda, in line with the recommendations by the Commission as described in its resolution 17/1 of 14 May 1999, with a view to contributing fully to the preparatory process for the special session of the General Assembly to be held in the year 2001 for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, including, *inter alia*, the strengthening and activation, wherever necessary, of national coordination mechanisms, inclusive of local authorities and civil society partners, along the models pioneered at Habitat II;

"5. *Invites* all Member States in a position to do so to provide financial resources for the preparatory process for the special session, in particular to enable least developed countries and their national civil-society partners to prepare adequately for, and be fully involved in, the preparatory process and the special session itself."

3. *Requests* the Executive Director to report on the progress attained in the implementation of the present resolution to the Commission at its eighteenth session.

14 May 1999
9th meeting

2. Other resolutions

17/2

Assistance for human settlements reconstruction to Latin America and the Caribbean and other regions following recent natural catastrophes

The Commission on Human Settlements,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 51/185 of 16 December 1996, in which, *inter alia*, the Assembly reaffirmed that disaster prevention forms part of sustainable development plans of vulnerable countries and communities,

Recalling also resolution 16/3 of 6 May 1997 of the Commission on Human Settlements, requesting the strengthening of the Centre's disaster-management-oriented activities,

Recalling further paragraphs 170 to 176 of the Habitat Agenda, [1] which guide the activities of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) in the areas of disaster prevention, mitigation and preparedness, and post-disaster rehabilitation,

Acknowledging the devastating effects of hurricanes, earthquakes and other natural disasters, such as, *inter alia*, Hurricane George, Hurricane Mitch, El Niño-related floods, the earthquake in the coffee-growing belt of Colombia, the volcano eruption in Montserrat and similar calamities in other parts of the world that struck several cities and rural areas, *inter alia*, in the Latin American and Caribbean region during 1998 and in 1999, causing thousands of deaths, the displacement of people and the destruction of human settlements,

Noting with appreciation the actions undertaken by the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) to cope with the human settlement rehabilitation and reconstruction needs caused by those events,

Noting that the magnitude of the reconstruction and rehabilitation tasks following a disaster requires a sustained effort on the part of the Centre which surpasses the human resources available,

1. *Requests* the Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) to take all possible measures to ensure that technical resources available within the global disaster-management programme at headquarters and regional offices, and within other relevant global programmes, be extended to address aspects of disaster prevention, mitigation, preparedness and reconstruction of human settlements in the Latin American, Caribbean and other regions; these measures should be taken in coordination with relevant United Nations bodies, bilateral and multilateral donors and national efforts;

2. *Invites* all Governments in a position to do so, to increase their technical and financial support to the disaster-management activities of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat);

3. *Requests* the Executive Director to report on the implementation of the present resolution to the Commission at its eighteenth session.

14 May 1999
9th meeting

17/3

Countries with economies in transition

The Commission on Human Settlements,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions 51/175 of 16 December 1996 and 53/179 of 15 December 1998 on countries with economies in transition, in which the Assembly confirmed the necessity fully to integrate those countries into the world economy,

Recalling also its resolution 16/4 of 6 May 1997 on countries with economies in transition,

Noting the desire of countries with economies in transition further to develop regional and interregional cooperation,

Recognizing the need for assistance in improving housing legislation and reform in the housing sector,

1. *Invites* the Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) fully to take into account the needs of countries with economies in transition in the course of developing strategies and programmes of cooperation with them on the basis of provisions of the Habitat Agenda,[1] in particular its paragraphs 202 (c) and (i);

2. *Requests* the Executive Director to continue, with due regard to the needs of countries with economies in transition, to pay special attention, *inter alia*, to:

(a) Improved management of the development of human settlements by employing modern monitoring according to the international system of city and housing indicators;

(b) Standard-setting and elaboration of up-to-date provisions and norms which define city quality indicators;

(c) Promotion of access to international financial organizations of the United Nations system and to other financial sources in the State and private sectors;

(d) Promotion of exchange of experience in resolving problems of reform of the city economy and of the governance of human settlements;

(e) Initiation and implementation of specific technical assistance projects in accordance with the normative role and work programme and budget of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) for countries with economies in transition, as requested by the Commission in its resolution 16/4;

3. *Also requests* the Executive Director to report on the implementation of the present resolution to the Commission at its eighteenth session.

14 May 1999
9th meeting

17/4

Regionalization

The Commission on Human Settlements,

Recalling its resolution 14/7 of 5 May 1993 on the strengthening of regional activities, which gives high priority to regional activities within the framework of the development of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat),

Recalling also its resolution 15/7 of 1 May 1995 on supporting the Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), in consultation with Governments, to establish regional offices of the Centre as a way of strengthening its presence and activities in the regions, as well as its resolution 16/25 of 7 May 1997, on the establishment of the Fukuoka office;

Recalling further its resolution 16/10 of 6 May 1997, recognizing the support given by the Government of Turkey and the city of Istanbul to the organization of the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, held in Istanbul from 3 to 14 June 1996;

Taking into consideration the two reports prepared by the Executive Director pursuant to paragraph 2 (g) of

resolution 16/19, of 7 May 1997, which clarified the mandate of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) regional offices, outlined the regionalization strategy of the Centre and emphasized that regional offices should be an integral part of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), contributing fully to the implementation of the work programme,

Taking note of the ongoing revitalization and reform of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat),

Taking into account the mandate and responsibilities of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) as defined in the Habitat Agenda,[1]

Having considered the report of the Executive Director on the activities of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements,[2]

1. *Takes note with interest* of the regionalization strategy presented by the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) in response to resolution 15/7 of the Commission and the establishment of regional offices as an integral part of the Centre;

2. *Acknowledges* the valuable work undertaken by the Rio de Janeiro and Fukuoka offices of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) since their inception;

3. *Notes with appreciation* the offer made by the Government of Turkey to host an office of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) in Istanbul;

4. *Requests* the Executive Director to elaborate a comprehensive strategy for the representation of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) in the regions, its decentralized functions and its offices other than in Nairobi, taking into account the responsibilities that the Centre has been given in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, the new strategic focus of the Centre, its revitalized and integrated approach to work and the new organizational structure;

5. *Recommends* that the Executive Director, in preparing his report, take into account the experiences of existing regional offices, information offices and liaison offices, in particular with respect to existing arrangements and offers for the hosting and funding of offices;

6. *Also recommends* that the Executive Director include in his report, *inter alia*, an analysis of costs, funds and financial needs for the Centre's representation outside its headquarters, including costs incurred in the medium and long term;

7. *Further recommends* that the Executive Director, for the purposes of achieving cost-effectiveness and positive synergies, consider, *inter alia*, the following points:

(a) The possibility of co-located offices of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and the United Nations Environment Programme, respecting the distinct identities of the two organizations, as well as the modalities for existing arrangements;

(b) The relationship between the Centre's offices in the regions and the United Nations Development Programme (including in its role as the United Nations Resident Coordinator);

(c) The relationship between the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) offices in the regions and the United Nations regional commissions;

8. *Requests* the Executive Director to consult further with the Government of Turkey on the financial and practical modalities of the hosting of an Istanbul office of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat);

9. *Also requests* the Executive Director to submit a report on the implementation of the present resolution, including his recommendation on the establishment of new offices of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), including the possible office in Istanbul, to the Commission at its eighteenth session.

14 May 1999
9th meeting

17/5

Role of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)

The Commission on Human Settlements,

Noting the role performed by the Committee of Permanent Representatives in accordance with Commission resolutions 12/8 of 3 May 1989, 13/3 of 8 May 1991, 15/9 of 1 May 1995 and 16/8 of 7 May 1997,

Noting with appreciation the activities of the Committee of Permanent Representatives in the period between the sixteenth and seventeenth sessions of the Commission, and the constructive cooperation between the Committee of Permanent Representatives and the secretariat of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) in preparation of the seventeenth session of the Commission,

1. *Invites* the Executive Director and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) to continue their cooperation with the Committee of Permanent Representatives;

2. *Requests* the Executive Director to take the necessary steps to clarify the current status of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, to explore the possibilities for its future status and role, including possible financial implications, and to report thereon to the Commission at its eighteenth session.

14 May 1999
9th meeting

17/6

Views of the Commission on Human Settlements on the report of the Secretary-General on environment and human settlements

The Commission on Human Settlements,

Taking into account that the report of the Secretary-General on environment and human settlements[3] is under consideration by the General Assembly,

Acknowledging the ongoing revitalization process of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), carried out under the direction of the Acting Executive Director, and the linkages between this process, the recommendations in the report of the Secretary-General and the wider United Nations reform,

Noting the distinction made by the Secretary-General between recommendations requiring actions at the Secretariat level and those requiring decisions and measures at the international level,

Noting also that a majority of the recommendations in the report of the Secretary-General address environmental issues only,

1. *Welcomes* the report of the Secretary-General on environment and human settlements submitted to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session, in which he sets forth the recommendations of the United Nations Task Force on Environment and Human Settlements on reforming and strengthening United Nations activities in the field of environment and human settlements, and expresses its appreciation for the comprehensive and forward-looking recommendations of the Task Force under the chairmanship of the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme;

2. *Notes with appreciation* the intention of the President of the General Assembly that the Assembly, at its current session, should consider in a fully open and transparent manner the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on environment and human settlements;

3. *Supports* the proposal of the Secretary-General regarding the establishment of an environmental management group for the coordination of the environmental and human settlements activities of the United Nations system, and encourages the Secretary-General to undertake consultations with members of the Administrative Committee on Coordination to develop its scope, appropriate criteria for membership and working methods in a flexible and cost-effective manner for its expeditious establishment;

4. *Also supports* the proposals for strengthening the Nairobi location, as the only United Nations headquarters located in a developing country, taking full advantage of the co-location of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and the United Nations Environment Programme to maximize synergies, where appropriate, while maintaining the two organizations as separate United Nations organizations with separate executive directors, and the need to strengthen the United Nations Office at Nairobi, as an exceptional measure, with sufficient resources from the regular budget to fulfil its tasks;

5. *Welcomes* the proposal that the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) should strengthen its normative core activities consistent with the new strategic vision,[4] which will allow it to develop into a centre of excellence on adequate shelter for all and sustainable urban development;

6. *Recommends* that the Centre, at the same time, maintain its operational support, particularly to developing countries, within the framework of the Habitat Agenda[1] and the strategic vision of the Centre;

7. *Agrees* with the proposal that the Commission should devote particular attention to its own role in monitoring the implementation of the Habitat Agenda;

8. *Welcomes* the recommendations concerning the need constructively to engage non-governmental organizations and civil society in the work of the United Nations, particularly in the light of the experiences gained in the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), held in Istanbul from 3 to 14 June 1996, and the Commission on Sustainable Development;

9. *Requests* the Acting Executive Director to convey the views of the Commission on Human Settlements,

as contained in the present resolution, to the Secretary-General.

14 May 1999
9th meeting

17/7

Revitalization of the Habitat Centre

The Commission on Human Settlements,

Recalling the Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements[5] and the Habitat Agenda,[1] as well as General Assembly resolution 51/177 of 16 December 1996, in which the Assembly, *inter alia*, designated the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) as a focal point for the implementation of the Habitat Agenda and called for a comprehensive and in-depth assessment of the Centre with a view to its revitalization,

Recalling also General Assembly resolution 52/190 of 18 December 1997, in which the Assembly, *inter alia*, requested the Secretary-General to address urgently the serious management and financial situation of the Centre and urged the Executive Director of the Centre to take further action towards the reform of the administrative and financial management of the Centre pursuant to the recommendations of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, the relevant reports of the United Nations Board of Auditors, Commission resolutions 16/8 of 7 May 1997, on revitalization of the Habitat Centre, and 16/19 of 7 May 1997, on corrective measures in administrative and budgetary matters, and Commission decisions 16/28 of 7 May 1997, on the draft work programme of the Centre, and 16/29 of 7 May 1997, on the budget of the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation for the biennium 1998–1999,

Recalling further that, in its resolution 16/8, the Commission requested the Secretary-General to take into account, in undertaking a comprehensive and in-depth assessment, a clear set of guiding principles and recommendations with regard to a revitalized United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat),

Bearing in mind the initiative of the Secretary-General in establishing the United Nations Task Force on Environment and Human Settlements to make recommendations for reform of the work of the United Nations in the fields of environment and human settlements,

Recognizing that revitalization of the Centre requires stable, adequate and predictable financial resources,

Taking note of the progress report of the Executive Director on the activities of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)[2] and the summary contained therein of the steps taken by the Executive Director to revitalize the Centre and to focus its activities and organizational structure along strategic lines and streamline and improve its financial and administrative management,

1. *Mandates* the Executive Director to implement the new strategic vision[4] comprehensively to advance the Habitat Agenda, as embodied in the work programme[6] and budget[7] of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) for the biennium 2000–2001, through the two subprogrammes on adequate shelter for all and on sustainable urban development and through the global campaigns on secure tenure and on urban governance, and welcomes the focus provided by the annex to the progress report of the Executive Director,[4] which recommends that the Centre confirm its status as the United Nations agency for cities and human settlements;

2. *Calls upon* the Executive Director to seek the views of States on visible "catch-phrases" that can assist in the global advocacy and mobilization of support towards the implementation of the Habitat Agenda and to report thereon to the Commission at its eighteenth session;

3. *Encourages* the Executive Director to fully implement, as a matter of urgency, all administrative and financial management reforms, as part of the ongoing revitalization process;

4. *Invites* the Secretary-General, when considering the approval of a new organizational structure of the Centre, to consider the recruitment of qualified staff as a matter of urgency;

5. *Requests* the Executive Director, in establishing a new organizational structure, to focus on quality and efficiency of management, aiming to implement General Assembly resolution 53/119 of 9 December 1998 on improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat, giving due regard to gender balance, geographical representation and in accordance with United Nations rules and regulations;

6. *Calls upon* Governments to ensure sufficient financial support to the Centre, to assist in the full implementation of the revitalization process;

7. *Requests* the Bureau of the Commission, with the support of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, to monitor the progress of the revitalization process and its results in the implementation of the prioritized work

programme of the Centre and to report thereon to the Commission at its eighteenth session.

14 May 1999
9th meeting

17/8

The State of the World's Cities: 1999

The Commission on Human Settlements,

Recalling the commitment by Member States to implement the Habitat Agenda[1] through local, national, subregional and regional plans of action and/or other policies and programmes drafted and executed in cooperation with interested parties at all levels,

Recalling also the recommendations from the "City Summit" in Istanbul that all partners of the Habitat Agenda, including local authorities, the private sector and communities, should regularly monitor and evaluate their own performances in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda through comparable human settlements and shelter indicators and documented best practices,

Recalling further that such indicators and information on best practices, which should be available and accessible to all, will be provided to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), taking into account the need for reporting procedures to reflect diversity in regional, national, subnational and local characteristics and priorities,

Recognizing that the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) is responsible for establishing an appropriate global process for analysing and monitoring major trends in urbanization and the impact of policies on urban and rural settlements, for tracking progress in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda and for continuing its publications programme, including, *inter alia*, publication of the *Global Report on Human Settlements*,

Appreciating that, in pursuance of Commission resolutions, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) has established a Global Urban Observatory that will permit comparative international evaluation and implementation of a global programme for the collection, analysis and dissemination of universal key urban indicators and best practices,

Supporting the strategy of the Global Urban Observatory of networking with urban observatories at all levels to facilitate information dissemination and policy-making functions,

Convinced of the need to take full advantage of modern information and communications technology for building capacity to monitor and evaluate urban development in a globalizing world,

1. *Calls upon* the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) to continue, in cooperation with capacity-building partners, the implementation of an Internet-based urban information and knowledge system to strengthen the ability of Governments, local authorities and key partners to gain access to and make use of information to monitor and assess urban conditions and trends and to formulate effective urban policies;

2. *Requests* the Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) to synthesize information and knowledge from this global urban information and knowledge system in a summary report entitled *The State of the World's Cities* prior to each of the Commission's biennial sessions and to produce, in cooperation with key stakeholders, a comprehensive report on the state of the world's cities, accompanied by appropriate policy recommendations, for review by the General Assembly in the year 2001 of progress in implementing the Habitat Agenda;

3. *Also requests* the Executive Director to facilitate a global consultative process, in coordination with appropriate United Nations agencies, representatives of key stakeholders in sustainable urban development and technical experts, in order to establish universal urban information standards and protocols and to produce an urban classification system, incorporating key words and concepts from the Habitat Agenda and from other recent United Nations global plans and platforms of action;

4. *Invites* the Executive Director, in view of the planned special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, to consider the consolidation of the report *The State of the World's Cities: 2001* with the third edition of the *Global Report on Human Settlements*;

5. *Also invites* the Executive Director, through appropriate consultative processes:

(a) To improve the list of universal urban indicators by adding appropriate key indicators on poverty, environment, gender equality and governance and, where necessary, minimum sets of region-specific indicators;

(b) To test and disseminate tools and methods for the local selection and analysis of indicators and other relevant information;

(c) To develop a set of comparable urban indices;

6. *Further invites* the Executive Director to expand the identification, analysis and dissemination of best practices to include, specifically, urban policies, plans of action and legislation and environmental best practices (the latter in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme and its partner groups);

7. *Urges* Governments to support, as appropriate, regional, national and local urban observatories, networks and capacity-building institutions.

14 May 1999
9th meeting

17/9

Illegal Israeli human settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory*

The Commission on Human Settlements,

Recalling its resolutions 13/6 of 8 May 1991 and 14/9 of 5 May 1993, on housing requirements for the Palestinian people,

Recalling also its resolution 16/18 of 7 May 1997 on illegal Israeli human settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories,

Taking note of General Assembly resolutions ES-10/3 of 15 July 1997, ES-10/4 of 13 November 1997, ES-10/5 of 17 March 1998 and ES-10/6 of 9 February 1999, adopted at its tenth emergency special session, on the illegal Israeli actions in occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the occupied Palestinian territory, and the call in the latter to convene on 15 July 1999 at the United Nations Office at Geneva a conference on measures to enforce in the occupied Palestinian territory the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 12 August 1949,[8]

Taking note also of the General Assembly resolution 53/55 of 3 December 1998, on Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem,

Concerned at Israel's continued illegal actions in the occupied Palestinian territory, including the construction of the new Israeli settlement at Jebel Abu Ghneim, the building of other new settlements and the expansion of existing ones, the construction of by-pass roads and the confiscation of lands, and the demolition of Palestinian houses,

Also concerned at the serious continuous deterioration in living conditions and instability of human settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory, as a result of the Israeli occupation practices,

Considering that the issue of housing for the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, falls within the mandate of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat),

Recalling paragraph 25 of the Habitat Agenda,[1] in which it is stated that alien and colonial domination and foreign occupation are destructive to human settlements and should therefore be denounced and discouraged by all States, which should cooperate to achieve the elimination of such practices,

Noting that the Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) has not presented a comprehensive report on his contribution in compliance with Commission resolution 16/18,

1. *Calls upon* the Israeli authorities to implement the following measures in order to enable the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory to secure their housing needs:

(a) Provide dignified (appropriate) physical conditions in their human settlements where needed;

(b) Put an end to the confiscation of Palestinian lands and the establishment of settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory;

(c) Restore those occupied lands which have been altered before and during the recent illegal actions to their original state;

(d) Refrain from applying policies that prevent and hamper the issuance of building permits to the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem;

(e) Accept the *de jure* applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War[8] to the occupied Palestinian territory;

2. *Insistently requests* Member States and all multilateral financial institutions to halt all forms of assistance and support for illegal Israeli settlement facilities in the occupied Palestinian territory;

3. *Calls upon* the international donor community and all financial institutions, in coordination with the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), to increase financial assistance to alleviate the housing problems facing the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory;

* Adopted by a vote of 25 to 1, with 23 abstentions.

4. *Requests* the Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) to organize a meeting on the establishment of a human settlements fund for the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory;

5. *Also requests* the Executive Director to cooperate with the Secretary-General in facilitating the organization of a conference of the High Contracting Parties to the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, on measures to enforce the Convention in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, to be held at the United Nations Office at Geneva;

6. *Further requests* the Executive Director to prepare the comprehensive progress report requested by the Commission in its resolution 16/18 and to present it within three months to the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat);

7. *Invites* the Commission at its eighteenth session to take appropriate measures against the Israeli authorities in accordance with the findings of the comprehensive progress report;

8. *Requests* the Executive Director to present to the Commission at its eighteenth session a report on the implementation of the present resolution and, in particular, on the housing situation in the occupied Palestinian territory and the problems posed by the Israeli illegal actions in that respect.

14 May 1999
9th meeting

17/10

The rural dimension of sustainable urban development

The Commission on Human Settlements,

Recalling paragraph 6 of the Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements[5] and paragraphs 163 to 169 of the Habitat Agenda,[1]

Requests that urban-rural interdependence be taken into consideration in the execution of the work programme of the Centre for the next biennium, given the strong synergy between urban and rural areas.

14 May 1999
9th meeting

17/11

Women in human settlements development and in the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)

The Commission on Human Settlements,

Aware of the commitment made by Governments in the Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements[5] to ensure the full and equal participation of all women and men and the effective participation of youth in political, economic and social life,

Recalling that the empowerment of women and their full and equal participation in political, social and economic life, the improvement of health and the eradication of poverty are essential to achieving sustainable human settlements,

Noting that in the strategic vision for a revitalized United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)[4] it is recommended that one of the primary indicators of the success of the interventions of the Centre and an explicit focus for its policy work be the empowerment of women,

Recalling that in its resolution 16/6 of 7 May 1997 on women in human settlements development, the Commission requested the creation of a gender coordination unit directly under the Executive Director in order to mainstream the gender perspective in all policies, projects, programmes and activities of the Centre,

Recalling also that in the same resolution, the Commission also requested that adequate resources for the gender coordination unit be allocated from within the existing resources of the Centre, but without diverting resources from the Centre's Women in Human Settlements Development Programme (now the Women and Habitat Programme),

Stressing that General Assembly resolution 53/119 of 9 December 1998 on improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat reaffirms the goal of 50/50 gender distribution in staffing by the year 2000 in all categories of posts within the United Nations system, and calls for gender action plans,

1. *Requests* that the empowerment of women as one of the primary indicators put forth in the strategic vision for a revitalized United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) be translated into clear policy and action and promptly implemented in the Centre's work;

2. *Invites* the Centre to involve, to this purpose, existing expertise outside the Centre, in particular global women's networks;

3. *Commends* the Acting Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) on the establishment of the Gender Unit in November 1998;

4. *Requests* the Acting Executive Director to ensure that both the Gender Unit and the Women and Habitat Programme are equipped, with immediate effect and within available resources, to meet the challenges of effectively implementing the new strategic vision;

5. *Also requests* the Acting Executive Director to develop, by the year 2000, a gender action plan to implement General Assembly resolution 53/119, including the goal of achieving a 50/50 gender distribution in staffing;

6. *Urges* the Acting Executive Director to make full use of the revitalization process to implement this gender action plan in all categories of posts;

7. *Invites* member Governments to ensure financial and other support to both the Gender Unit and the Women and Habitat Programme;

8. *Requests* the Acting Executive Director to include a report on the implementation of the present resolution in his progress report to the Commission on Human Settlements at its eighteenth session.

14 May 1999
9th meeting

17/12

Elimination of the use of lead in petrol

The Commission on Human Settlements,

Aware that the harmful effects of lead on human health and the environment have long been understood, that lead poisoning can result in impaired growth, arrested development, mental retardation and other developmental and neurological disorders and that lead poisoning most severely affects and impairs children,

Convinced that Governments can best proceed by developing comprehensive lead-poisoning prevention programmes, which include raising awareness, identifying populations affected by lead poisoning and controlling and, where possible, eliminating sources of exposure,

Mindful that, because the causes of lead poisoning from petrol are known and preventive measures exist, the global elimination of such poisoning is an achievable goal that would serve as a precedent-setting success story in international cooperation to advance the commitments of the Habitat Agenda,[1]

Recalling that, in paragraph 43(bb) of the Habitat Agenda, all countries committed themselves to the elimination of lead in petrol as soon as possible,

1. *Calls upon* all Governments to incorporate, in accordance with their development strategies, into their national policies and plans of action developed for the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), held in Istanbul from 3 to 14 June 1996, a strategy to phase out leaded petrol and to manage the uncontrolled exposure to lead from other sources or, where possible, eliminate it; the action plans should, if possible, identify laws, regulations, policies and actions designed to accomplish this strategy, and benchmarks of progress;

2. *Requests* Governments to provide comprehensive information on their progress in eliminating the use of lead in petrol and managing the uncontrolled exposure to lead from other sources, in a transparent, publicly accessible and understandable form, to the General Assembly at its special session for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda;

3. *Invites* the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), the United Nations Environment Programme and other international organizations to work jointly on issues related to the elimination of lead;

4. *Urges* the international community, including the United Nations system and relevant international organizations, to facilitate the provision of technical and financial assistance to developing countries and countries with economies in transition to assist them in their activities in this regard.

14 May 1999
9th meeting

17/13

Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000

The Commission on Human Settlements,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions 52/191 of 18 December 1997 on the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000 and 52/192 of 18 December 1997 on the follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and the future role of the Commission on Human Settlements, by which the Assembly adopted a plan of action for the implementation of the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000 for the period 1998–1999,[9] requesting the Commission on Human Settlements to set in motion the undertaking of a terminal review at its eighteenth session and to incorporate reporting on the Global Strategy for Shelter

to the Year 2000[10] in the reporting on the implementation of the Habitat Agenda,[1]

Taking note with satisfaction that many Governments have reviewed and reformulated national shelter strategies based on the principles of the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000 and incorporated those principles into their national plans of action for the implementation of the Habitat Agenda,

Having considered the report of the Executive Director on the implementation of the Habitat Agenda,[11] which covers also topics on adequate shelter for all and implementation of the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000,

1. *Reconfirms* that, at its eighteenth session, the Commission on Human Settlements will carry out the terminal review of the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000, and decides to report the results of the terminal review to the General Assembly at its special session for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, to be held in June 2001, for final consideration and conclusion;

2. *Requests* Governments to prepare terminal reports on the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000, as part of their preparation for the special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda;

3. *Requests* the Executive Director to conduct a review of the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000 within the framework of implementation of the Habitat Agenda and to incorporate the results of the review, including suggestions for the future, into the report to the Commission at its eighteenth session.

14 May 1999
9th meeting

17/14

Resolution adopted by the Commission on Human Settlements at its seventeenth session on the preparations for the special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda

The Commission on Human Settlements,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions 51/177 of 16 December 1996 on the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and 52/192 of 18 December 1997, on follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and the future role of the Commission on Human Settlements,

Recalling also General Assembly resolution 53/180 of 15 December 1998, in which the Assembly decided that its special session for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda[1] would be held in June 2001 for a period of three working days and that the Commission on Human Settlements should serve as the preparatory committee for the special session,

Recalling further paragraph 34 of the report of the Secretary-General on the scope and organizational aspects of the special session, submitted to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session,[12] in which the Commission on Human Settlements was invited to consider and recommend, first, the provisional agenda for the first substantive session of the preparatory committee; second, the scope to be covered by the review and appraisal process; third, the issues to be addressed by a high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council on human settlements issues to be held before the year 2001; and, fourth, the issues to be addressed by the Commission at its eighteenth session which would be supportive of the work being done by the preparatory committee,

Affirming that, in paragraphs 13 and 14 of the Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements[5] it was recognized, *inter alia*, that the Habitat Agenda could only be effectively implemented if the role and functions of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) were strengthened and adequate financial resources, including new and additional resources from all sources, were mobilized at the national and international levels,

Being aware of the enormous demographic population shifts taking place in the world, rapid urbanization, increasing poverty and the changing nature of the relationships between cities and hinterlands,

Acknowledging the need to make measurable progress in the global implementation, monitoring and assessment of the Habitat Agenda,

Noting the opportunity offered by the occasion of the special session of the General Assembly for a positive and fruitful exchange of knowledge and experience of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda at all levels,

Having considered the report of the Executive Director on the special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda,[13]

1. *Calls upon* the preparatory committee, in its meetings, and in consultation with the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and with other organizations at the national, regional and local levels, to devise a framework for the exchange of information and knowledge of effective policies and alternative solutions to problems for the special session of the General Assembly in the year 2001;

2. *Requests* that the preparatory committee ensure that the special session elaborate upon the key items of the Habitat Agenda, highlighting the most important development goals;

3. *Decides* to recommend to the preparatory committee at its organizational session the following:

(a) *Provisional agenda for the first substantive session of the preparatory committee.* The provisional agenda should include:

(i) The scope to be covered by the review and appraisal process;

(ii) Local, national and regional preparations for the special session of the General Assembly;

(iii) The role of local authorities, other partners and relevant United Nations organizations and agencies in the review and appraisal process;

(iv) The provisional agenda and organizational arrangements for the second substantive session of the preparatory committee;

(b) *Scope to be covered by the review and appraisal process.* The Commission endorses the scope and substantive aspects recommended by the Secretary-General in paragraphs 12 to 20 of his report to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session;

(c) *Issues for consideration by the Economic and Social Council at its coordinating segment in the year 2000.* With reference to paragraph 10 of General Assembly resolution 53/180, the preparatory committee may wish, at its organizational session, to recommend to the Economic and Social Council the consideration of the following issues at its coordinating segment in the year 2000:

(i) International cooperation for the implementation of adequate shelter for all;

(ii) The role of the Habitat Agenda partners in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda;

(iii) Capacity-building and institutional development, including the mobilization of the United Nations resident coordinator system for the implementation of the Habitat Agenda at the country level;

(d) *Issues to be addressed by the Commission on Human Settlements at its eighteenth session that would be supportive of the work being done by the preparatory committee.* The Commission decides to include in the provisional agenda of its eighteenth session the following items that would be supportive of the work being done by the preparatory committee:

(i) Local implementation of the Habitat Agenda, including the role of local authorities;

(ii) International cooperation and the review of mechanisms for the monitoring and implementation of the Habitat Agenda;

(iii) Lessons learned from best practices and partnerships in the achievement of adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements in an urbanizing world;

4. *Invites* the Executive Director to convey the contents of paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 (a) to (c) of the present resolution to the preparatory committee at its organizational session.

12 May 1999
8th meeting

17/15

Follow-up to the special session of the General Assembly for the purpose of an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of Agenda 21

The Commission on Human Settlements,

Recalling its resolution 16/24 of 6 May 1997 calling upon the General Assembly at its special session for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of Agenda 21[14] to take into account the message of the Habitat Agenda[1] and the Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements[5] in order to secure sustainable human settlements and safe and healthy living conditions in an increasingly urbanizing world,

Recalling also that, by the same resolution, the Commission requested the Executive Director to submit his report on the implementation of Agenda 21[15] to the special session of the General Assembly, together with the comments made on it by the Commission,

Aware that at its special session, held from 23 to 28 June 1997, the General Assembly adopted the Programme

for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, as contained in the annex to resolution S-19/2 of 28 June 1997,

Reaffirming the concern expressed in paragraph 32 of the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 that global urbanization is a cross-sectoral phenomenon that has an impact on all aspects of sustainable development,

Recognizing the synergy that can be established in cities and communities in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda and local Agenda 21 initiatives, by linking operational and normative activities and promoting cooperation at national, regional and global levels,

Recognizing also the importance for integration in all sectors, including energy and transport, water use and waste management, and the need for international cooperation in support of national efforts,

Noting with appreciation the effort of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) in following up the outcome of the special session of the General Assembly, particularly in the implementation of the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, as outlined in the report of the Executive Director on the follow-up to the special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of Agenda 21,[16]

1. *Reaffirms* those calls for action as outlined in the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 to implement the commitments made at the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), held in Istanbul from 3 to 14 June 1996, and for new and additional resources from all sources necessary to achieve the goals of adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements development;

2. *Calls upon* Governments to adopt policies and to establish appropriate facilitating mechanisms for coordinated implementation at the local level of the Habitat Agenda and local Agenda 21 initiatives, including:

(a) Promoting community development, improving access to security of land tenure, housing and basic services, and fully integrating people living in poverty into economic, social and political life, which are crucial to sustainable development;

(b) Enabling all people to achieve a higher level of health and well-being through an integrated approach to the provision of basic services with a view to improving community health and eliminating unsafe uses of lead, including the use of lead in gasoline;

(c) Promoting best practices and supporting sustainable consumption of energy, water and forest-based resources and the recycling and reuse of waste in cities;

3. *Also calls upon* Governments, where appropriate, to promote and support partnerships of all interested parties, particularly the private sector and community groups, in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda and Agenda 21 at the local level;

4. *Emphasizes* the role of the international community and external assistance to developing countries and countries with economies in transition in improving the quality of information on the impact of urbanization on all aspects of sustainable development, in sharing of information on the use of economic instruments and in the transfer and dissemination of environmentally sound technology;

5. *Invites* the Executive Director, within available resources, and in coordination with other external support agencies both within and outside the United Nations system, to support Governments by, *inter alia*:

(a) Intensifying research, monitoring and evaluation of progress in the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 at the local level, particularly in areas where such implementation is coordinated with local implementation of the Habitat Agenda;

(b) Promoting and facilitating exchange of information and the transfer of expertise on best practices and on national and local initiatives on sustainable human-settlements development;

(c) Building capacity at the national and local levels and mobilizing financial and technical support from the international community to strengthen the means of implementation of developing countries and countries with economies in transition;

6. *Requests* the Executive Director to report on the implementation of the present resolution in his progress report to the Commission on Human Settlements at its eighteenth session.

14 May 1999
9th meeting

17/16

Local implementation of the Habitat Agenda with particular attention to local Agenda 21s

The Commission on Human Settlements,

Recalling paragraph 213 of the Habitat Agenda,[1] in which it is stated that local authorities should be supported in their efforts towards implementing the Habitat Agenda inasmuch as local action is required and that all appropriate participatory mechanisms, including local Agenda 21 initiatives, should be developed and employed,

Recalling also chapter 28 of Agenda 21,[14] which places emphasis on the role of local authority initiatives and that of local Agenda 21s in support of the implementation of sustainable development at the local level,

Recalling further paragraph 33 of chapter II of the Habitat Agenda, entitled "Goals and principles", which highlights the importance of partnerships to the achievement of sustainable human-settlements development and the provision of adequate shelter for all and basic services, as well as section III of Agenda 21, which outlines the roles of different partner groups in implementing sustainable development,

Bearing in mind the experience gained by the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) in implementing programmes at the local level through the Sustainable Cities Programme, the Urban Management Programme, the Localizing Agenda 21 Programme and the Community Development Programme,

Recognizing the many local environmental management and development activities initiated within the context of local Agenda 21s, the many useful lessons learned therefrom and the continuing importance of local Agenda 21s as an instrument for implementing sustainable development at the local level,

Concurring with the Secretary-General's observation, in his report on implementation of and follow-up to the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), that the Habitat Agenda provides a useful framework for the implementation of relevant aspects of Agenda 21, since a number of chapters of Agenda 21 are targeted at impacts of activities that originate within human settlements,[17]

Recalling its decision 16/31 of 7 May 1997, in which it decided to consider the theme "Local implementation of the Habitat Agenda, with particular attention to local Agenda 21s" at its seventeenth session,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), containing the theme paper on local implementation of the Habitat Agenda, with particular attention to local Agenda 21s;[18]

2. *Calls upon* Governments, in cooperation with local authorities and civil-society partners, and with assistance from the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), as appropriate, at national and local levels, to initiate national publicity campaigns to increase awareness of both the Habitat Agenda and local Agenda 21s and to support their implementation at the local level;

3. *Also calls upon* Governments, in cooperation with local authorities and civil-society partners, and with assistance from the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), as appropriate, at national and local levels, to initiate the revision of legal and institutional frameworks to enable and facilitate partnerships at the local level;

4. *Calls upon* Governments at national and local levels, jointly with civil-society partners and with assistance from the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), as appropriate, to develop or intensify programmes for training locally elected representatives, community leaders and all local-level partners in how to establish and manage local-level partnerships within the context of the Habitat Agenda and local Agenda 21s;

5. *Calls upon* Governments at national and local levels, jointly with civil-society partners and with assistance from the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and other interested organizations, as appropriate, to put in place or intensify existing programmes and projects designed to improve the financial resource mobilization and management capacities of local authorities so as to establish sustainable institutional and financial frameworks for local development;

6. *Requests* the Executive Director to increase efforts to sensitize and assist countries in the local-level implementation of both the Habitat Agenda and Agenda 21, especially with regard to the mounting of national publicity campaigns, revision of legal and institutional frameworks to enable the participation of local-level partners and setting up of urban observatories;

7. *Urges* the international community, including the United Nations system and relevant international organizations, working in cooperation with national Governments, to facilitate the provision of technical and financial assistance to local-level partners to implement the

Habitat Agenda and Agenda 21, taking into account local-level priorities;

8. *Requests* the Executive Director to make efforts to ensure that increasing awareness of the Habitat Agenda and Agenda 21 at the local level is an integral part of the two global campaigns, for secure tenure and for urban governance, proposed in the Centre's work programme for the period 2000–2001[6] and its related publicity activities.

14 May 1999
9th meeting

17/17

International cooperation for the implementation of the Habitat Agenda

The Commission on Human Settlements,

Recalling paragraph 195 of the Habitat Agenda,[1] in which it is emphasized that the implementation of the Habitat Agenda is the primary responsibility of each country at all levels, but that the overall decline in official development assistance is a serious cause of concern in many developing countries,

Also recalling General Assembly resolution 51/177 of 16 December 1996 on the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), in paragraph 10 of which the need is stressed to establish or strengthen, as appropriate, participatory mechanisms for the implementation and review of and follow-up to the Habitat Agenda and national plans of action,

Further recalling paragraph 211 of the Habitat Agenda, which contains an appeal to all multilateral and bilateral development agencies and the Bretton Woods institutions to establish and/or strengthen cooperative mechanisms to integrate commitments and actions concerning adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements development into their policies,

Affirming the agreement contained in the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development,[19] as reiterated in paragraph 204 (dd) of the Habitat Agenda, that developed and developing country partners should allocate 20 per cent of official development assistance and 20 per cent of the national budget, respectively, to basic social programmes,

Recalling that the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) is a member of the United Nations Development Group, whose principal objective is to strengthen the policy and programme coherence of United Nations development activities,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) containing the theme paper on international cooperation for the implementation of the Habitat Agenda;[20]

2. *Recommends* that Governments and development agencies, including those within the United Nations system and working, where possible, within the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and its coordination mechanisms and relevant international organizations, mobilize adequate resources for promoting and stimulating the establishment and reinforcement of participatory mechanisms, at national and local levels, for the implementation of the Habitat Agenda and related national plans of action, with a view to reactivating the successful mobilization of partners;

3. *Invites* the Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) to pursue an increase in the mobilization of resources from the international community, especially the industrialized countries, and the Bretton Woods institutions and regional banks, as well as the private sector, and to pursue and increase similar efforts from countries that have not until now been in a position to extend such support;

4. *Calls upon* Governments and development agencies to support the revitalization of the monitoring mandate of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) in order to follow up on the progress of international assistance to the human settlements sector;

5. *Also calls upon* Governments and development agencies to financially support the global campaigns on secure tenure and on urban governance, launched by the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) as key elements of its 2000-2001 work programme;[6]

6. *Requests* the Executive Director to ensure continuous support to an evolved role of the existing regional offices of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) in all actions related to international cooperation for the implementation of the Habitat Agenda in their corresponding regions;

7. *Also requests* the Executive Director to support regional and subregional forums, through the existing system of regional offices, to develop consultative mechanisms, to exchange experience on implementing arrangements and progress related to the Habitat Agenda, to raise the awareness of national Governments, local authorities and other partners and to discuss regional cooperation strategies, and, in this respect, invites the international community to participate in the "Urban 21" series of conferences;

8. *Calls* for international support for the Centre's special programme for Africa, which represents an integrated regional approach to the implementation of the Habitat Agenda;

9. *Urges* the international community, including the United Nations system and its coordination mechanisms and relevant international organizations, to cooperate with national Governments in order to facilitate the provision of technical and financial assistance to local authorities and their partners to implement their local-level priorities;

10. *Calls upon* all relevant institutions carrying out infrastructure-development activities at the local level, to involve local authorities in the identification and implementation of such projects, to give sufficient attention to operation and maintenance costs so as to ensure sustainability and to strengthen the capacity of local authorities to assume their responsibilities in those activities;

11. *Requests* the international community to support post-conflict countries, through reconstruction programmes to rehabilitate destroyed houses and infrastructures and to resettle war victims in their properties, and to pay special attention to vulnerable groups, especially women and children victims of war who, as a result, have become heads of families;

12. *Appeals* to Governments and development agencies, including the United Nations system and its coordinating mechanisms, to support the important role of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) in implementing innovative operational activities, including its efforts in resource mobilization and in the development of systematic coordinated approaches with other development agencies;

13. *Requests* the Executive Director, keeping in view the global role and experience of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), to work within the United Nations system and its coordinating mechanisms to promote and support the implementation at the national and local levels of systematic coordinated approaches addressing the various dimensions of urban poverty; this should be through consultations in selected countries with key development partners and Governments and should include the assessment of complementarities and comparative advantages, the reinforcement of national and local coordinating capacities and strategic commitments from international partners;

14. *Also requests* the Executive Director to prepare a comprehensive theme paper on international cooperation for the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, to be presented at the special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, with particular emphasis on the progress made with international assistance to the urban sector.

14 May 1999
9th meeting

17/18

Cooperation with partners: role of local authorities in the work of the Commission

The Commission on Human Settlements,

Recalling the Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements,[5] endorsed by the General Assembly,[21] which identifies local authorities as the closest partners of Governments and as essential in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda,[1]

Recalling also paragraph 223 of the Habitat Agenda and paragraph 21 of General Assembly resolution 51/177 of 16 December 1996, which call for a review of the working methods of the Commission in order to involve in its work representatives of local authorities and other partners in the field of adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements development, taking into account its rules of procedure,

Recalling further its resolution 16/12 of 7 May 1997 on the review of the working methods of the Commission on Human Settlements: the involvement of partners,

Noting with satisfaction the important contribution made by local authorities from all over the world to the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, including the effective partnerships being established between the Centre, Member States and local authorities in the design, adoption and implementation of local plans of action inspired by the Habitat Agenda and consistent with local Agenda 21s,

Recognizing the urgent need to accelerate international, regional and national progress in the adoption of policy measures aimed at strengthening cooperation between central and local governments,

Noting that the Commission on Human Settlements is the United Nations body uniquely suited to foster this policy dialogue and action,

Considering that innovative measures need to be adopted on an urgent basis to accelerate action in the work leading to the special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, to be held in June 2001,

1. *Requests* the Executive Director to establish a committee of local authorities as an advisory body to serve the purpose of strengthening the dialogue with local authorities from all over the world involved in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda;

2. *Decides* that the members of the committee shall be selected by the Executive Director from States Members of the United Nations and members of the specialized agencies or of the International Atomic Energy Agency, in consultation with national Governments, where appropriate, and based upon nominations, *inter alia*, by regional or international associations of local authorities;

3. *Also decides* that the Committee shall be composed of not more than twenty members, as selected by the Executive Director, taking into account the broadest possible representativeness, including equitable regional distribution;

4. *Invites* the Executive Director to convene the constituting meeting of the Committee, if possible during 1999, in order to decide on its rules of procedure and to formulate its main functions and activities with a view to strengthening the cooperation between local authorities and all other stakeholders in regard to the implementation of the Habitat Agenda and local Agenda 21s;

5. *Requests* the Executive Director to provide a report on the implementation of tne present resolution to the Commission at its eighteenth session, including in that report suggestions on strengthening the involvement of local authorities and other partners in the work of the Commission.

14 May 1999
9th meeting

17/19

Partnership with youth

The Commission on Human Settlements,

Concerned with the appalling situation in which many young people still live, excluded from many parts of society, because, *inter alia*, of lack of proper sanitation facilities and inadequate space and security,

Recalling the memorandum of understanding between the Youth for Habitat International Network and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), signed in May 1998,

Noting with appreciation the work done to date by the Youth for Habitat International Network, involving one hundred and three youth non-governmental organizations from all over the world in more than fifty countries, in many fields of interest for human settlements and developments,

Recalling paragraph 25.7 of Agenda 21,[14] in which it is stated that each country and the United Nations should support the promotion and creation of mechanisms to involve youth representation in all United Nations processes in order to influence those processes,

Believing that youth concerns should be dealt with using an integrated approach which should allow young people, who are designated key partners for the achievement of adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements in paragraphs 182 (n), 120 (a) and 120 (b) of the Habitat Agenda,[1] to participate fully on local, national, regional and international levels,

Noting with appreciation that some countries have taken steps to include youth representatives in their delegations, and encouraging others to do so,

Aware of the fact that youth are in a vulnerable and crucial stage of life requiring special attention in social policies, education, city planning and many other policy areas, as is highlighted in, *inter alia*, paragraph 6.19 of Agenda 21,

Strongly convinced that solutions to tackle problems on the global, regional, national and local levels require the participation of all concerned groups, including youth,

Stressing the importance of gender balance in all programmes and actions concerning young people,

Fully believing that young people are not only future leaders, but also partners of the present day,

1. *Invites* the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) to continue to work with youth organizations, including the Youth for Habitat International Network, in all fields concerning youth, on a participatory basis in all related phases of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda;

2. *Calls upon* all Governments to take account of the fact that young people are at a challenging stage of their lives that requires that their expressions of lifestyle and opinion be respected with regard to the Habitat Agenda;

3. *Encourages* all Governments that have not yet done so to facilitate the presence of youth representatives, who may be selected upon the recommendation of youth organizations, in future meetings of the Commission on Human Settlements;

4. *Welcomes* the publication of a popular version of the Habitat Agenda to enable, *inter alia*, young people to familiarize themselves with its goals and purposes, and encourages all Governments to facilitate the translation of this document into their respective national languages;

5. *Decides* to include the item "Role of youth in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda and Agenda 21" in the agenda for the eighteenth session of the Commission on Human Settlements in 2001;

6. *Requests* the Executive Director to report on progress made in implementing the present resolution to the Commission on Human Settlements at its eighteenth session.

14 May 1999
9th meeting

17/20

Work programme and budget of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) for the biennium 2000–2001

The Commission on Human Settlements,

Recalling the Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements,[5] the Habitat Agenda[1] and General Assembly resolution 51/177 of 16 December 1996, by which, *inter alia*, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) was designated as a focal point for international cooperation in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, as well as Commission resolution 16/19 of 7 May 1997 and Commission decision 16/29 of 7 May 1997, on budgetary issues;

Recognizing that, in the follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), held in Istanbul from 3 to 14 June 1996, the overall orientation of the medium-term plan and the work programme of the Centre for the biennium 2000–2001 emanate from the specific role for the Centre outlined in paragraph 228 of the Habitat Agenda,

Recalling that, in paragraph 4 of the Istanbul Declaration the commitment to combat the deterioration of the quality of life within human settlements, particularly within developing countries, was reconfirmed,

Recognizing the need for the work programme for the biennium 2000–2001 to focus on well-defined objectives and strategic issues, in order to contribute to the achievement of the goals of the Habitat Agenda,

Affirming that the global advocacy of the United Nations of the goals of security of tenure and sound urban governance is a relevant and appropriate strategy for promoting the objectives of the Habitat Agenda,

Noting that the strategic vision for a revitalized United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), as contained in the note by the secretariat,[4] provides the fundamental direction for the preparation of the draft work programme for the biennium 2000–2001, within the financial constraints of the Centre,

Noting also the recent efforts of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and the Executive Director to improve and to make transparent the fiscal and administrative management of the Centre, to draft a harmonized budget in line with the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and to implement the recommendations of the Board of Auditors in their report for the biennium ended 31 December 1997,[22]

Noting with appreciation the ongoing work of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) in the field of housing rights, in collaboration with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, *inter alia*, in the context of the regular, extensive reporting of the High Commissioner under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,[23]

1. *Approves* the draft work programme for the biennium 2000–2001,[6] while underlining the need for the programme as it is further developed adequately to reflect the strategic vision for a revitalized Centre;

2. *Confirms* that the reorganization from four to two subprogrammes reflects the need for an improved focus with a limited number of well-defined objectives and that this provides for direct correspondence with the two themes of the Habitat Agenda of adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements in an urbanizing world;

3. *Also confirms* that the strategy to combine normative and operative functions in the work programme is a direct response to the recommendations made by the Commission in its resolution 16/8 of 7 May 1997, on revitalization of the Centre, the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services,[24] the report of the four Governments' assessment,[25] the report of the Secretary-General on environment and human settlements[3] and the report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session on the assessment of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat);[26]

4. *Calls upon* the Executive Director to consult closely with member Governments in developing the specific details of the work programme for the biennium 2000–2001;

5. *Also calls upon* the Executive Director, in elaborating and implementing the work programme, to consider carefully the potential impact on reducing poverty, improving human shelter, promoting governance, as described in paragraph 45 (a) of the Habitat Agenda, in the context of an enabling approach, promoting healthy living environments and improving the status of women;

6. *Recommends* that the medium-term plan for the period 2002–2005 have the same strategic focus as the work programme 2000–2001 and be organized into two subprogrammes corresponding to the two themes of the Habitat Agenda;

7. *Encourages* the Executive Director to continue his efforts to improve the financial and administrative management of the Centre and, in particular, to comply fully with all the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions;

8. *Invites* the Centre further to harmonize its budget methodology with that of similar United Nations bodies and to present its future budgets in a results-based format;

9. *Requests* the Executive Director to raise more funds from all sources and to broaden the donor base to include all members of the United Nations, especially from countries that have developed a greater capacity to contribute, to ensure the successful implementation of the work programme for the biennium 2000-2001;

10. *Urges* all Governments to make efforts to pay their contributions prior to the year to which they relate or at the earliest possible date, in order to enable the Centre to plan and execute the work programme more effectively;

11. *Invites* the Executive Director to assess the exact level of services required by and provided to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) by the United Nations Office at Nairobi and to assess the appropriateness of the Centre's payments to the United Nations Office at Nairobi to make possible any adjustments that may be required, and to report on the actions and remedies taken in that regard to the Commission at its eighteenth session;

12. *Approves* an allocation of 22,808,300 dollars for the revised budget for the biennium 1998–1999 and 23,019,600 dollars for 2000–2001, recognizing that this will require substantial additional funding.

14 May 1999
9th meeting

17/21

Habitat II debt to the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation

The Commission on Human Settlements,

Having considered the report on the budget of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) for the biennium 2000–2001[7] and the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions,[27]

Taking note of the inter-fund borrowing of 2,041,100 dollars from the Foundation general-purpose funds for the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and the inability of the Centre to recover the amount owed to the Foundation,

Mindful of the fact that the inter-fund borrowing was not in conformity with United Nations rules and regulations and diverted funds from the purposes for which they were intended,

Recalling its resolution 16/19 of 7 May 1997, in which it requested the Executive Director to repay this debt, and noting with regret that that decision has not been implemented,

Noting the recommendation of the Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session, in presenting the internal audit report on Habitat II,[28] to write off the debt,

Noting also that the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has no objection to writing off the debt,

1. *Notes with appreciation* the reports of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the Office of Internal Oversight Services regarding the Habitat II debt to the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation;

2. *States* that, provided the relevant United Nations financial rules and regulations are applied and that no financial implications are incurred outside the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation, it has no objection to writing off the debt of 2,041,100 dollars of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements

(Habitat II) to the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation;

3. *Recognizes* the need for proper budgetary practices to be applied in the preparatory process for the special session of the United Nations General Assembly in the year 2001 for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda.

14 May 1999
9th meeting

17/22

Cooperation between the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and the United Nations Environment Programme

The Commission on Human Settlements,

Considering General Assembly resolution 40/199 of 17 December 1985 on cooperation between the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and the United Nations Environment Programme,

Noting the importance of this cooperation for the effective implementation of Agenda 21[14] and of the Habitat Agenda[1] and the Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements,[5] adopted at the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), specifically chapter IV, sections C, D and E of the Habitat Agenda,

Recalling its resolutions 15/8 of 1 May 1995 and 16/20 of 6 May 1997, on cooperation between the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and the United Nations Environment Programme in the Sustainable Cities Programme,

Taking note of the recommendations of the United Nations Task Force on Environment and Human Settlements of 1998, as set forth in the report of the Secretary-General on environment and human settlements to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session[3] and of decision 20/17 of 5 February 1999 of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on the report of the Secretary-General on environment and human settlements,

Taking note also of the joint progress report of the Executive Directors of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and the United Nations Environment Programme on cooperation between the Centre and the Programme,[29]

Noting with satisfaction the achievements of the joint Sustainable Cities Programme and of the joint Urban Environment Forum,

Realizing that similar joint activities between the Centre and the United Nations Environment Programme can contribute greatly to the concretization of the new strategic focus of the Centre,

1. *Requests* the Executive Director to continue and to expand cooperation between the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and the United Nations Environment Programme, particularly in the Sustainable Cities Programme, the project on managing water for African cities and the Urban Environment Forum, and to participate, in this respect, if requested to do so, in the coordination mechanisms of the United Nations system to respond to natural disasters, with a view to spearheading the advancement of collective know-how and normative guidelines;

2. *Also requests* the Executive Director to strengthen cooperative efforts between the Centre and the United Nations Environment Programme regarding media outreach on public information and awareness-building activities;

3. *Further requests* the Executive Director to initiate substantive collaboration between the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and the United Nations Environment Programme on the preparation of global reports, such as the *Global Environment Outlook*, the *State of the World's Cities* and the *Global Report on Human Settlements*, in order to enhance impact and to raise efficiency;

4. *Encourages* all Governments actively to support these cooperative activities;

5. *Requests* the Executive Director to report on progress in the implementation of the present resolution to the Commission at its eighteenth session.

14 May 1999
9th meeting

17/23

Ombudsman Unit services to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)

The Commission on Human Settlements,

Considering the services rendered by the Ombudsman Unit of the United Nations Environment Programme since its inception in 1993 in the fields of mediation, inquiry, counselling, the provision of information, briefing and management review, thereby meeting essential demands from the personnel of the United Nations Environment Programme,

Taking into account decision 20/41 of 4 February 1999 of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on the functioning of the Ombudsman Unit, in which it is stressed that other United Nations entities in Nairobi and their personnel would greatly benefit from the full range of services provided by the Ombudsman Unit and the Executive Director is invited to extend the services of the Ombudsman Unit to other United Nations entities upon request,

Attentive to the proximity of and existing links between the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and the United Nations Environment Programme and their personnel,

Aware of the reinforcement of the Ombudsman Unit since the twentieth session of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme,

1. *Invites* the Executive Director to explore and, if possible, to enter into an inter-agency agreement for the United Nations Environment Programme to extend the services of its Ombudsman Unit to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) on a no-cost basis until the eighteenth session of the Commission on Human Settlements;

2. *Requests* the Executive Director to submit to the Commission at its eighteenth session all relevant information and reports with regard to the operations of the Ombudsman Unit related to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat);

3. *Decides* to review, at its eighteenth session, the Ombudsman Unit services related to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and the financial implications of the continuation of those services to the Centre.

14 May 1999
9th meeting

B. Decision

17/24

Themes for the eighteenth session of the Commission on Human Settlements

At its 9th plenary meeting, on 14 May 1999, the Commission on Human Settlements decided that it would consider two themes for its eighteenth session. It further decided that those themes would be:

(a) Security of tenure;

(b) Urban governance.

It also decided that the corresponding draft outlines contained in document HS/C/17/13 would be presented to the Commission on Human Settlements at its eighteenth session.

Notes

[1] *Report of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat II), Istanbul, 3–14 June 1996* (A/CONF.165/14), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[2] HS/C/17/2.

[3] A/53/463 (also distributed to the Commission as an annex to document HS/C/17/CRP.5).

[4] HS/C/17/2/Add. 2, annex.

[5] *Report of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat II), Istanbul, 3–14 June 1996* (A/CONF.165/14), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

[6] HS/C/17/8.

[7] HS/C/17/9.

[8] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973.

[9] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 8* (A/52/8/Add.1), annex.

[10] General Assembly resolution 43/181, annex.

[11] HS/C/17/3.

[12] A/53/267.

[13] HS/C/17/3/Add.1.

[14] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3–14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex II.

[15] HS/C/16/15.

[16] HS/C/17/4.

[17] A/51/384, para. 34.

[18] HS/C/17/5.

[19] *Report of the World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, 6–12 March 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.8), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[20] HS/C/17/6.

[21] General Assembly resolution 51/177 of 16 December 1996.

[22] HS/C/17/CRP.2, annex.

[23] General Assembly resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

[24] A/51/884.

[25] HS/C/16/CRP.17, annex.

[26] HS/C/17/CRP.4, annex.

[27] HS/C/17/9/Add.1, annex.

[28] A/52/821.

[29] HS/C/17/10.

Annex II

List of documents before the Commission at its seventeenth session

Agenda item	*Symbol*	*Title*
		Letter of convocation
		Notification by the Executive Director
		Letter on pledging to the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation
3	HS/C/17/1	Provisional agenda of the seventeenth session of the Commission on Human Settlements
3	HS/C/17/1/Add.1	Annotated provisional agenda and organization of work: note by the secretariat
4	HS/C/17/2	Activities of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat): progress report of the Executive Director
4	HS/C/17/2/Add.1	The state of the world's cities: 1999: report of the Executive Director
4	HS/C/17/2/Add.2	Strategic vision for the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat): discussion and recommendations: note by the secretariat
4	HS/C/17/2/Add.3	Draft resolutions prepared by the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)
4	HS/C/17/2/Add.4	Draft resolutions prepared by the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat): note by the secretariat
5	HS/C/17/3	Implementation of the Habitat Agenda: report of the Executive Director
5	HS/C/17/3/Add.1	Special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda: report of the Executive Director
6	HS/C/17/4	Follow-up to the special session of the General Assembly for the purpose of an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of Agenda 21: report of the Executive Director
7 (a)	HS/C/17/5	Local implementation of the Habitat Agenda, with particular attention to local Agenda 21s: report of the Executive Director
7 (b)	HS/C/17/6	International cooperation for the implementation of the Habitat Agenda: report of the Executive Director
8	HS/C/17/7 and Corr.1	Cooperation with partners: report of the Executive Director
9	HS/C/17/8	Draft work programme of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) for the biennium 2000–2001: report of the Executive Director
10	HS/C/17/9	Proposed budget of the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation for the biennium 2000–2001: report of the Executive Director

Agenda item	*Symbol*	*Title*
10	HS/C/17/9/Add.1	Proposed budget of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat): report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions
10	HS/C/17/9/Add.2	Financial matters: use of extrabudgetary resources of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) in the 1998–1999 period: report of the Executive Director
11	HS/C/17/10	Joint progress report of the Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme
11	HS/C/17/11	Cooperation with agencies and organizations within the United Nations system, intergovernmental organizations outside the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations: report of the Executive Director
11	HS/C/17/12	Matters arising out of the resolutions of major legislative organs of the United Nations and other intergovernmental bodies which are brought to the attention of the Commission: report of the Executive Director
12	HS/C/17/13	Themes for the eighteenth and future sessions of the Commission: report of the Executive Director
14	HS/C/17/14	Provisional agenda and other arrangements for the eighteenth session of the Commission: note by the secretariat (issued in-session)
9	HS/C/17/CRP.1	Draft work programmes of the regional commissions in the field of human settlements for the biennium 2000–2001: note by the secretariat
10	HS/C/17/CRP.2	United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation: financial report for the biennium ended 31 December 1997 and report of the Board of Auditors: note by the Secretariat
11	HS/C/17/CRP.3	Main decisions and resolutions of the General Assembly (fifty-second and fifty-third sessions) of relevance to the work of the Commission
4	HS/C/17/CRP.4	Report of the Secretary-General on the assessment of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)
4	HS/C/17/CRP.5	Report of the United Nations Task Force on Environment and Human Settlements
3	HS/C/17/INF/1	State of preparedness of the documents for the Commission on Human Settlements as at 10 March 1999
4	HS/C/17/INF/2	List of documents before the Commission
4	HS/C/17/INF/3	Operational activities report, 1999: note by the secretariat
4	HS/C/17/INF/4	Activities of the Global Parliamentarians on Habitat: note by the secretariat
10	HS/C/17/INF/5	Status of voluntary contributions to the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundations as at 1 March 1999: note by the secretariat
4	HS/C/17/INF/6	Guidelines on practical aspects in the realization of the human right to adequate housing, including the formulation of the United Nations housing rights programme
4	HS/C/17/INF/7	Report of the United Nations Task Force on Environment and Human Settlements: note by the secretariat

Agenda item	*Symbol*	*Title*
4	HS/C/17/INF/8	Draft Secretary-General's bulletin on the organization of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)
	HS/C/17/INF/9	African position on matters pertaining to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)
3	HS/C/17/INF/10/Rev.2	Final list of participants

Annex III

Summaries by the Chair of the high-level segment of the seventeenth session of the Commission on Human Settlements and of the dialogues with local authorities and other Habitat Agenda partners

A. High-level segment of the plenary

Introduction

1. The high-level segment of the seventeenth session of the Commission on Human Settlements comprised four plenary meetings, on 5, 6 and 7 May 1999, and its discussions focused on the following three main issues: first, the report of the United Nations Task Force on Environment and Human Settlements, including the ongoing revitalization and restructuring of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) (agenda item 4); second, implementation of the Habitat Agenda (agenda item 5); and, third, cooperation with partners, including cooperation with agencies and organizations within the United Nations system, intergovernmental organizations outside the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations (agenda item 8 (b)).

1. Revitalization of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)

2. There was general satisfaction with and strong support for the direction and progress of the reform and revitalization process, as well as the new strategic vision. Delegations welcomed the steps taken to reorganize the financial and administrative management and, in that context, referred to the ongoing reform of the United Nations system and to the report of the Secretary-General on environment and human settlements, submitted to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session (A/53/463).

3. Many delegations stressed the need for clear priorities and a clear relationship between the work programme and the budget and called for a limited number of core activities in support of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda. In addition, many delegations expressed support for the new strategic focus on security of tenure and urban governance and voiced the hope that the revitalization of the Centre would facilitate attainment of an adequate and predictable financial base. Some delegations representing developing countries suggested that their countries also shared responsibility for the Centre's future financial security and pledged their financial support.

4. Many delegations supported the focus on urban development and the proposal that the Centre should be presented as the United Nations city agency. Many delegations, however, voiced concern that such an emphasis could divert attention from and marginalize rural areas, villages and smaller towns.

5. While some delegations welcomed synergies and expanded cooperation and integration with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), including sharing a common Executive Director, others said that there was a need to maintain the Centre as a strong independent entity with its own Executive Director.

2. Implementation of the Habitat Agenda

6. All delegations underscored the importance of implementing the Habitat Agenda at the international, regional, national and local levels, citing specific new programmes and policy initiatives that they had undertaken within their countries to achieve the goals of adequate shelter and sustainable development. A large number emphasized that strengthened international cooperation was essential to the fulfilment of the recommendations of the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), with many calling specifically for increased financial resources for that purpose. A number of delegations referred to activities and programmes of the Centre that were contributing towards sustainable human settlements, with many stating their expectation that a revitalized Centre would be in a stronger position to play its coordinating and focal point role in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda.

7. While many delegations agreed on the urgent need to address the challenge of urbanization as a priority, many others also cautioned that efforts to that end should not be carried out at the expense of policies to improve rural settlements and develop rural areas, with several delegations explicitly requesting the Centre not to reduce its attention to improvement of rural settlements in moving the Habitat Agenda forward.

8. Several delegations affirmed their support for the decentralization of the Centre's activities to the regions as a strategy for bringing direct assistance closer to Member States and other partners in implementing the Habitat Agenda, while others expressed the opinion that the regionalization policy was still uneven in terms of the resulting benefits to the various regions.

9. While pointing out that peace was a prerequisite for development, a number of delegations stated that, in recent years, armed conflict had exacted — and was continuing to exact — a heavy toll on human settlements and human settlements development and several called on the Centre to provide reconstruction assistance to countries and regions afflicted by armed conflict and natural and man-made disasters.

3. Cooperation with partners

10. All delegations underscored the importance of partners and partnerships between national and local governments, and with non-governmental organizations and other organizations of civil society, for the successful implementation of the Habitat Agenda. Many delegations cited specific examples of how local authorities and non-governmental organizations were being strengthened and actively involved in policies and programmes to achieve adequate shelter and sustainable development of human settlements in their respective countries. In that respect, several delegations also made specific references to their implementation of decentralization policies as recommended in the Habitat Agenda. One delegation cited the Global Parliamentarians on Habitat as a model example of the work of Habitat partners, while another specifically expressed support for the work on the World Charter of Local Self-Government.

11. Many delegations also emphasized that a strong partnership between Habitat and local authorities, non-governmental organizations and others in civil society was vital to the success of the Centre's implementation of the Habitat Agenda. Several delegations also expressed specific support for a closer partnership between the Commission and local authorities and their international associations.

12. The representative of the World Associations of Cities and Local Authorities Coordination (WACLAC) emphasized that WACLAC and its member associations wished to establish an effective partnership with Habitat and the Commission, and expressed the hope that proposals for the inclusion of local authorities in the work of the Commission would be accepted. He further expressed his support for the work programme and the work on the World Charter of Local Self-Government. The representative of the International Union of Local Authorities welcomed the opportunity for a direct dialogue with central Governments at the Commission sessions.

13. The representative of the Global Parliamentarians on Habitat commended the new work programme of the Centre, especially the legislative components, as he believed it reflected the Global Parliamentarians' own priorities in regard to adequate shelter. The representative of the Habitat International Coalition emphasized the need for genuine partnership between the Centre and non-governmental organizations.

14. Many delegations referred to the cooperation between UNEP and the Centre and a number stressed the importance of developing synergies and closer cooperation between the two bodies, with most also underscoring that they should remain separate and distinct entities. In addition, several delegations also called for close cooperation between the Centre, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda. A number of delegations also mentioned the assistance they were receiving from programmes and projects that the Centre was implementing in cooperation with other United Nations agencies. Several delegations specifically welcomed the launching of the Habitat/World Bank Cities Initiative/Cities Alliance, while others drew attention to the Sustainable Cities Programme and the Urban Management Programme as examples of the Centre's excellent cooperation with UNEP and UNDP, respectively.

15. The representative of the World Bank, while referring to the new partnership with Habitat, emphasized that it tallied well with the Centre's new strategic vision and the Bank's new comprehensive development framework. The representative of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights underscored the Centre's cooperation with the Office on the right to adequate housing and on a proposed United Nations housing rights programme, while the representative of the Economic Commission for Africa welcomed the Centre's new Regional Office for Africa and the Arab States, saying that he looked forward to increased cooperation. The representative of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) outlined that organization's work in the area of governance, while the representative of UNDP made a statement on cooperation between his organization and the Centre.

B. Dialogues with local authorities and other Habitat Agenda partners

Introduction

16. In paragraph 2 of its resolution 16/12 of 7 May 1997, the Commission decided to provide, at its future sessions, opportunities for partners to engage in a dialogue among themselves and with Governments and noted that such

dialogues could, as appropriate, serve as an input to the work of the Commission. In the same resolution, partners were also invited to propose activities for the inter-sessional periods of the Commission in order to accelerate the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, while the Executive Director was requested to actively involve partners in the Centre's work through, where appropriate, the provision of inputs to the Centre in its development, implementation and evaluation of the work programme.

17. The three dialogues with partners were held in the course of three plenary sessions on Friday, 7 May 1999, and Monday, 10 May 1999. The themes of the dialogues were introduced by panellists from all regions of the world, representing the leading global and regional associations of local authorities, individual cities, parliamentarians, trade unions, professionals, researchers, non-governmental organizations and women's groups.

18. The first dialogue was devoted to partnership between Governments and local authorities, given the central importance of the local level implementation of the Habitat Agenda, as well as the recognition in the Istanbul Declaration of local authorities as the Governments' closest and most essential partners in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda.

19. The second and third dialogues were of a thematic nature. Their themes and topics were closely linked to the goals of the Habitat Agenda and to the points of emphasis stressed in the new strategic vision for Habitat.

1. Dialogue between Governments and local authorities for the implementation of the Habitat Agenda

20. There was general agreement that, to put partnership into practice, a dialogue had to be initiated with and between central and local governments as a means of exploring ways in which each could complement the work of the other. A number of speakers stressed that local authorities needed to be empowered in the processes of the Commission, and the inclusion of a dialogue within the current session was welcomed by representatives of local authorities.

21. Some speakers expressed concern at the issue of sharing responsibilities between central and local governments in the provision of social services in cities. Others believed there was an urgent need to establish democracy through the empowerment of local governments and local, freely elected representatives, since the effective implementation of the Habitat Agenda could only be ensured through society's freely elected representatives.

22. Many mayors from different regions described their experiences and outlined problems, opportunities, strategies and potential solutions. They suggested that the Habitat Agenda be included in the implementation of local Agenda 21s. Several speakers raised the issue of gender balance in local government and the need for the empowerment of women. A number of speakers pointed to the need to promote the endorsement of the World Charter of Local Self-Government.

23. A number of speakers recommended that the dialogue be continued and formalized within the work of the Commission as a means of promoting mutual understanding and cooperation between local authorities and all other stakeholders concerned with the implementation of the Habitat Agenda.

24. A letter from the Mayor of Istanbul addressed to the Chair of the Commission was read out. In the letter, strong support was expressed by the Mayor for the establishment of a Habitat office in Istanbul.

2. Divided city

25. Participants considered that one significant cause of divided cities was the continuing use of city management methods that had originally been designed in the context of a predictable socio-economic environment and which were unsuitable in an era of rapid change.

26. Migration of males from rural areas to cities was also identified as an important factor, with sex ratio imbalances among migrant communities in some cities causing disconnection from the mainstream of society. The growth of female headed households and the decline of the nuclear family were also important factors which contributed to the feminization of poverty, because policies that acknowledged those trends had not been devised.

27. The situation was aggravated by an approach to management with the emphasis on "red tape", rather than on responsiveness to need, and by forms of city planning that emphasized segregation of income groups and land uses.

28. A number of speakers suggested that decision makers were often detached from the issue of social exclusion and, therefore, had a reduced ability to address and respond to the problems. The capture of some city administrations by interest groups seeking only personal material gain, and not the welfare of all city residents, was also a serious problem.

29. Many speakers believed that, for solutions to be successful, they had to support existing trends of urban change, for example, the growth of the informal employment sector. In addition, a number of speakers drew attention to

the leading role of local authorities in addressing the issue of exclusion. In that regard, others drew attention to the importance of engaging excluded groups in city governance, to ensure that city management, being made more accountable, would improve. While noting the particular importance of representation of women in decision-making bodies, speakers stressed that all groups needed to be consulted on city policies and programmes.

30. Participants considered that there was ample scope for the involvement of the private sector, and city authorities had an important role in encouraging a sense of corporate responsibility to make such a commitment productive for all parties. Moreover, there was great scope for so-called public-private-people's partnerships to support activities that would reach all sectors of society.

31. Many speakers pointed to the role of rural areas and stressed that support for cities should not be at the expense of such areas. Indeed, the urban-rural divide was perceived as almost as important as that of the "divided city". It was therefore considered that solutions had to be devised that reflected the solidarity between urban and rural dwellers.

3. Shelter and security of tenure for the urban poor

32. Attention was drawn to the central problem that, with the decreasing role of the State and the demise of public housing, shelter had increasingly become a market commodity. In most countries, the gap between the demand for the supply of decent housing at an affordable price had widened and the lack of security of tenure in informal settlements had negative effects for investments and efforts to upgrade them.

33. A wide range of issues was discussed by the participants in the dialogue, and participants examined how the Centre's global campaign on secure tenure could address those issues effectively. Attention was drawn to the importance of decent shelter and basic services in determining the quality of life in human settlements. The poor needed to be provided with affordable and appropriate building materials and technologies, services, training, land and credit systems that were suitable to their needs and capacities. The issue of forced evictions was raised, together with the need for workable schemes when relocation became inevitable. In that context, legislative reforms pertaining to the field of shelter were called for.

34. Participatory approaches involving the poor and, in particular, women were required in policy formulation and execution. In that context, the important role and contributions of women in shelter development and the urgent need to eliminate impediments to gender balance and empowerment of women were highlighted. The need for information exchange and dissemination of lessons learned was also stressed. Shelter development was important for economic activity and job creation and for reducing poverty. In that process, security of tenure played a predominant role, together with appropriate land management. Parallel to shelter development, there was a need for economic and social support programmes, for prevention of mismanagement and corruption and for environmental protection and upgrading and adequate sanitation. Community groups had a role to play and support also had to be given to the informal sector and to the non-profit sector in shelter development. Specific issues had to be taken into account in the transformation from centrally planned economies to market arrangements.

35. In conclusion, it was pointed out that it was the security and not the form of tenure that really mattered and that the Centre's global campaign on secure tenure would aim at facilitating transformation from exclusion in cities to inclusion and integration by mobilizing all stakeholder groups to make shelter development a responsibility of society at large.

Annex IV
Summary of opening statements

A. Statement by M. Afsarul Qader, Chair of the Commission on Human Settlements at its sixteenth session

1. In his opening statement to the Commission, the Chair pointed to the rapid pace of urbanization and other global trends, which were also creating great disparities in levels of development among and within countries, most visibly in the cities. The Commission and the Centre were the institutions established by the international community to face the challenge of urbanization, and any failure in that endeavour would have serious consequences. For that reason, it was vital to strengthen international cooperation.

2. The Habitat Agenda offered a constructive vision for meeting that challenge, through, *inter alia*, the provision of sustainable urban development and adequate shelter, but the Agenda had now to be implemented with full vigour. To that end, the faults for which the Centre had been criticized in the past would have to be overcome. Since the last session of the Commission, much had been done in that regard under the leadership of the Acting Executive Director, including the stabilization of the financial situation and new organizational arrangements. Those and other matters were before the Commission at its seventeenth session. Accordingly, he called on the Commission to press ahead in ensuring predictable minimum resources for the Centre and in ensuring its effective management, and expressed the conviction that the Commission would make the right choices and realize the vision of the Habitat II Conference.

B. Policy statement by Klaus Töpfer, Acting Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)

3. In his opening address, the Acting Executive Director welcomed the President of Kenya and all government delegations to the Commission. He assured the President and the Government of Kenya of his conviction that the location of the United Nations Office at Nairobi was an asset to its work and that the United Nations needed a strong Centre for Human Settlements in Nairobi. Welcoming the leaders and representatives of local authorities, parliamentarians and non-governmental, youth and women's organizations, trade unions, the private sector, professionals and researchers, he said that their participation provided evidence of the new constructive partnership that the Centre was forging in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda.

4. Pointing to the rapid rise in the levels of urbanization throughout the world over the course of the current century, he noted that the twenty-first century would be the urban century, during which cities would increase their economic, social and environmental roles. He further noted that economic growth in cities would also directly benefit the economic and other development of rural areas.

5. As a consequence of urban population growth, poverty was increasingly becoming an urban phenomenon in developing countries, impacting most severely on women and children as a consequence of the constraints on women's economic opportunities and their lack of control over resources, not only in urban, but also in rural areas. As urban growth could not be reversed, the very process of urbanization must itself become an instrument in fighting poverty and social exclusion, and in ensuring social justice and environmental stability in urban and rural regions. In that regard, he noted with concern the downward trend in official development assistance (ODA), since there was a clear link between levels of ODA debt relief and the goals of sustainable urban development, poverty reduction and good governance. A further problem was posed by ongoing armed conflicts and humanitarian emergencies and, in that context, he assured participants that, in the future, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) would also play a vital role in post-conflict and post-disaster reconstruction.

6. He emphasized that rural development was a crucial element in the Centre's human settlements development strategy, as cities and rural areas were closely linked. Habitat would be the city agency but, through its strategies and programmes, the Centre would demonstrate that the sustainable development of urbanized regions was the vital precondition for achieving the development of rural areas.

7. If, however, the world community was to solve the problems of human settlements, then Habitat must fulfil its potential as the authoritative voice and catalyst for action. It was his expectation that the Commission would give a strong signal to the international community in that regard. The Habitat II Conference had called for the Centre to be a clearly profiled institution, focused on sustainable development of human settlements. In response to that call, an exercise to revitalize Habitat had been launched in 1998, in cooperation with Member States, especially through the

Committee of Permanent Representatives in Nairobi. That revitalization process had now been successfully completed. It had set the basis for a forward-looking organization that is flexible, innovative and proactive, able to implement policies and programmes effectively around shared goals, transparent and accountable in its dealings with donors, developing countries and people around the world, and equipped for fruitful partnerships with the rest of the United Nations system and the Bretton Woods institutions. The revitalization of Habitat would also satisfy the need for a city agency within the United Nations system.

8. He stressed that the future influence and success of the Centre would depend on the degree to which it built productive relationships with its partners. One of those new important partners was to be found in local authorities, as their contribution was vital to the success of the Centre's work in human settlements. Local authorities had an important role in providing solutions to local environmental and developmental issues and were at the forefront of action in that regard. The revitalized Habitat should therefore facilitate and encourage the role of local authorities in decision-making at the city level and in improving urban management and governance practices. Referring to the special session of the General Assembly in 2001 to review progress in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, he expressed the hope that, by that time, work would have been finalized on the World Charter of Local Self-Government as a legal framework for the decentralization policy called for in the Habitat Agenda.

9. He also underscored the importance of parliamentarians, as elected representatives, in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda and as partners in the work of the Centre. There was also a pressing need for partnership with non-governmental, youth and women's organizations, as well as with the private sector, trade unions, professionals and researchers.

10. Turning to the new strategy for the future, he informed the Commission that two global campaigns, on security of tenure and on urban governance, formulated out of the Habitat Agenda, would lead the Centre's work and shape the work programme and budget for the next biennium, as well as constituting the main criteria for the new organizational structure. Those two campaigns would be launched, subject to discussions by the Commission, immediately after the current session.

11. As part of the revitalization exercise, the Centre had also enhanced its accountability and transparency, as noted in the recent report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. A focused, transparent and accountable Centre was also worthy of support and commitment from Member States, and he urged the Commission at its current session to send a positive financial signal in that regard, otherwise some very difficult decisions would have to be made.

12. Regarding the relationship between the United Nations Development Programme (UNEP) and UNCHS (Habitat), he said that the streamlining of the administrative support structures for both bodies had been completed, yielding significant savings. The aim had been to use the synergies available in their administration and in their programme development and implementation to achieve common goals, while maintaining their distinctive and independent roles and mandates.

13. In conclusion, he affirmed his optimistic vision of a Centre capable of collaboration with Governments and all other partners in facing the challenges of urbanization in the twenty-first century, and stated his hope that the Commission at its current session would move Habitat forward towards meeting that challenge.

C. Statement by Daniel Toroitich arap Moi, President of the Republic of Kenya

14. The President extended his welcome to all participants on behalf of the Government and people of Kenya. He recalled that, during the inauguration of the sixteenth session of the Commission, he had emphasized that Kenya would like to see effective, accountable and transparent management of human and financial resources at the Centre, and he noted with appreciation that the revitalization of the Centre was now under way and that good progress had been made. In that regard, he pledged his Government's support and urged the Commission to provide the necessary guidance and support to ensure that the Centre had adequate financial and institutional resources to carry out its mandate.

15. He welcomed the commitment given by the Secretary-General during his visit to Nairobi in 1998 to ensure that UNEP and Habitat would continue to be headquartered at Nairobi under separate executive direction and serviced by the United Nations Office at Nairobi. In that regard, he expressed the hope that the United Nations offices in Nairobi would receive adequate resources from the regular budget of the United Nations to enable them to carry out their expanded mandates.

16. He regretted that three years after the Habitat II Conference the problem of human settlements still remained unresolved and that human settlements conditions had

continued to deteriorate in the face of the overwhelming social and economic difficulties facing many countries. The Istanbul Declaration and the Habitat Agenda were important benchmarks in the realization of adequate shelter for all, which required collaborative partnership and international cooperation by all stakeholders, and he expressed satisfaction that, at its current session, the Commission could be placing particular emphasis on those issues.

17. He was confident that the Commission would approve a realistic work programme for 2000–2001 and the necessary budgetary provisions to fulfil the expectations of the member States in their pursuit of human settlements development. He stressed, in that regard, that member States should fulfil their pledges, so that the Centre would have steady and predictable finances for its operations.

18. Turning to the growing levels of poverty and unemployment in his and many developing countries fuelled by low levels of economic growth, he informed participants that his Government had prepared a national poverty eradication plan for the period 1999–2015. He hoped that the plan would be supported by his country's development partners, in particular with regard to the debt burden facing his and other developing countries.

D. Statement by Germán Garcia Durán, Chair of the Commission on Human Settlements at its seventeenth session

19. In his statement following his election, the Chair said that he was taking on his responsibility at a time of global economic and social crises, which were deepening the gap between the developed and developing countries. The bridging of that gap was also the responsibility of the Commission and the Centre, in such areas as housing, sustainable human settlements and raising the quality of life of the poor. The Centre, as a consequence of efforts over the past year, had made great progress in overcoming past deficiencies, and he called on the Commission to give favourable consideration to the revitalization measures proposed by the Acting Executive Director and to ensure that the Centre had sufficient financial resources to move forward. He further appealed to the Commission to reach consensus on the various proposals on strengthening its dialogue with local authorities and other parties at the current — and critical — seventeenth session.

Annex V

Message from the Secretary-General to the Commission on Human Settlements at its seventeenth session

1. As we prepare to leave the twentieth century, half of humankind already lives in cities. As we enter the twenty-first, many more are set to follow them. Dealing with urbanization will be one of the biggest global challenges in the new millennium.

2. Alleviating poverty, protecting the environment, ensuring broad participation in local governments, all these will be vital if the majority of the world's people are to achieve prosperity without damaging the planet, our common home.

3. The Commission and the Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) have a crucial role to play helping us meet those challenges, in pursuing the global plan of action adopted at Istanbul three years ago.

4. And Habitat is rising to the occasion. As the city agency of the United Nations, you are building indispensable partnerships with local authorities and with civil society. Such partnerships point the way forward for the United Nations as a whole.

5. The global issues facing our planet not only challenge us, they also unite us. Habitat has understood this well; it is already acting upon it. And so, as a city dweller, world citizen and the Secretary-General of the United Nations, I send my best wishes to this seventeenth session of the Commission on Human Settlements. I am sure that your deliberations will bring great benefit to future generations of city dwellers around the world.

Annex VI

Children's Declaration presented to the Commission on Human Settlements at its seventeenth session

We, the children from Msongari Primary, Hospital Hill Primary, Ngunyumu Primary, Korogosho Primary, Parklands Primary, African Growth Ministries for Street Children and Sambamba Boys Street Theatre of Nairobi, would like to present the following declaration to the Commission on Human Settlements at its seventeenth session.

In preparation for and during our children's event on 7 May 1999, we identified the following requirements for the children:

- Good, healthy homes
- Sufficient food
- Good clothing
- Parental love
- Medical services
- Education
- Clean, safe water
- Essential amenities
- An environment free from pollution
- Reduced crime in cities

Recommendations for child-centred city management

We children would like to be more involved in the decision-making processes in cities. This will help local authorities and non-governmental organizations develop. We children have a right to participate in decisions affecting our lives. If given the opportunity and the means to help create and carry out programmes, we children can make these programmes more responsive to our needs. By participating in this way, we also gain self-esteem and valuable skills. In the case of street children, the path leading from the streets to schools, friends, community work and responsible adulthood has to be built by us children. As adults, you can help us build this path, but you have to allow room for setbacks and provide children with opportunities to devise creative ways to overcome them. We propose that decision makers promote projects developed by children for children in difficult circumstances.

We children would like to see that the management of a city and all those involved are more focused on the needs of the children. We certainly believe that in order to keep children's well-being a priority, municipal staff at all levels need training in how to work with local communities and respond to children's needs and the rights of children, especially those of poor families. City governments need to provide low-income groups, women and children with access to information, employment, resources and services. City governments should be transparent and accountable towards children.

Children should be involved in project implementation. The most effective projects bring together a wide variety of partners cutting across socio-economic lines and all levels of government. Non-governmental organizations, businesses, the media, municipal leaders, including mayors, and agencies at the national and international levels must work together to plan, carry out and monitor projects. Such involvement can help ensure that people are

held accountable for the impact of their actions on us children and our families. Children have a lot to contribute to these partnerships and must be allowed to participate to the full extent of their abilities. It is important that we feel like active contributors, not "token" or passive participants in need of adult assistance. When these projects are planned and reviewed, children must be given every reasonable chance to evaluate and criticize them.

Conclusion

We challenge the planners and the Government to provide a good setting and opportunities that will allow us children to achieve physical, emotional, spiritual and mental growth.

Annex VII

Statements made by the representatives of India and the Russian Federation in explanation of vote on the motion to take no action on draft resolution HS/C/17/L.4/Rev.1 entitled "Assistance in the Balkans in connection with the conflict in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia"

A. Statement by the representative of India

The problem sought to be addressed by the Russian Federation in its draft resolution is a matter of gravest concern for the international community. Apart from the various reports in the media of the ecological disaster unfolding in the region, there have been several reports on the destruction and damage of human settlements and civilian facilities in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. That a team of United Nations officials is likely to visit the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia for the purpose of assessing the damage and taking preliminary steps towards reconstruction is a further pointer to the devastation of human settlements in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

We are fully sympathetic to the initiative of the Russian Federation in bringing before this Commission the problems faced by the people of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. We would have expected a consensus in the Commission on a subject of such great importance and immediate relevance. As in the case of the Commission on Sustainable Development, however, we have been presented with a procedural device of a no-action motion to block consideration of the Russian text by the same delegations who argue elsewhere that it would thwart the democratic process if procedural no-action motions were moved against their drafts, targeting other countries. We have accordingly voted against the no-action motion. If the Russian draft had been put to a vote, we would have voted in favour of it.

B. Statement by the representative of the Russian Federation

[Original: Russian]

Let me first express my gratitude to those delegations who voted against the motion regarding the Russian draft resolution (HS/C/17/L.4/Rev.1) on assistance to Yugoslavia. Our particular gratitude is due to the delegation of Kenya, the warm hosts of Habitat here in Nairobi.

My delegation is struck with a feeling of deep disappointment and regret at what has just taken place in this room.

We are disappointed, because our opponents were unable to summon up the strength for a civilized dialogue with those who oppose the military adventure in the Balkans, which has cost the lives and homes of hundreds of thousands of people, and who call for the damage to be repaired.

It is hardly surprising that the opponents of the resolution include the representatives and allies of the countries whose bombs and missiles are raining down on the peaceful towns and villages of Yugoslavia. But we might well ask what the other delegations hope to find by joining their ranks — and that, I regret to say, is in all likelihood a matter of politics.

One way or another, our opponents were unable to find either convincing arguments to justify their positions or the will to hear out the arguments of others. The Commission has been blocked by a procedural decision, without even the recourse to any substantive explanation as to why it should not be allowed — or, to be more precise, why it is not desirable — for Habitat to mobilize the efforts of the international community and to develop measures to rebuild the ruined human settlements within Yugoslavia, which is what is called for in the Russian draft resolution.

The voting machine has slavishly done its work and the goal has been achieved — the resolution is "dead". Before the eyes of the entire civilized world, a simple manoeuvre has been used to block a humble attempt — made not at someone else's bidding, but as a result of our own conviction of the need to find a rapid way out of the situation created by the war, without using force or threats but through international humanitarian assistance. The silent majority of those abstaining and, in particular, those siding with the procedural obstruction can rest assured: their loyalty will be rewarded. Perhaps when a new victim is being chosen.

We find it regrettable, because those representatives who purport to favour an end to the bombing and a speedy return of peace to Yugoslavia did not want to state their position openly during the voting.

You should not labour under any illusions, distinguished colleagues: what has happened in Yugoslavia today could happen to any country, including your own. And when you need help to rebuild your towns and villages, your factories and manufacturing facilities, just as Yugoslavia does today, the experts in procedural niceties will unceremoniously deny a hearing for yourself and your plight. The most painful form of remorse springs from the realization that an opportunity has been missed, when the desire to be in the majority has led to the wrong choice being made and then to a sense of regret for what happened as a result.

And so, before voting for the procedural motion, or looking for an escape route among the abstainers, it would have been worth giving some thought to the fact that the fate even of your own country is possibly being decided here today.

Yet today, we have knowingly — I would even say deliberately — let slip a chance to take a real step towards achieving that goal; we have proved unable to restore the faith of nations in the truly limitless potential of wide international cooperation, based not on the right to force, but on the force of right.

It is particularly regrettable that, in disposing of the Russian resolution, the members of the Commission have in essence refused to support the efforts of the Habitat administration, already being undertaken on the direct instructions of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, to develop measures to repair the destruction caused by the aggression against Yugoslavia.